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AUTHOR Nicholson, Heather Johnston; And Others
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ABSTRACT

This document discusses the question of gender in youth development programs, those structured activities and opportunities sponsored by organizations other than schools and offered outside of school hours. Many of these organizations offer programs for people of all ages but the clear focus of this paper is early adolescence, about ages 10 to 15. The discussion is organized by several questions and assumes that planners of youth development programs are interested both in promoting what helps early adolescents to develop into self assured individuals who contribute to the society and in assuring that this process benefits all the potential young participant whatever their sex, color, nationality, culture or income. The questions are: (1) How similar or different are girls and boys at early adolescence? (2) How have issues of gender been addressed in youth organizations, past and present? (3) What gender issues affect the informal education and enrichment offered by youth development programs? (4) What are the implications of the current understanding of the effects of gender for planners of youth development programs? (5) What difference does it make whether youth development programs are offered in mixed-sex or single-sex settings? and (6) What are the priorities for research in understanding the significance of gender in youth development programs? Because people tend to treat youth as an undifferentiated, often middle class white male, mass, much more research is needed on the interaction of racial, ethnic, economic background and community variables with age and gender among early adolescents. (DK)

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GENDER ISSUES IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Heather Johnston Nicholson
Girls Incorporated National Resource Center

With the assistance of
Faedra Lazar Weiss and Mary F. Maschino

February 1992

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All of us involved in developing this paper hope it will be useful to our colleagues who work with young people across the nation.

Heather Johnston Nicholson
February, 1992

Gender Issues in Youth Development Programs

Many of the major secular youth organizations--Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. and YMCA, for example--were founded when it was generally assumed that boys and girls needed to prepare for very different adult roles. Many of these organizations were and some still are single-sex organizations designed to foster positive youth development. Other organizations serving young people have been mixed-sex, often called coeducational, from the beginning.

Several forces have given the question of gender in youth development programs new salience. The women's movement of the 1970s led to new awareness of gender equity as an issue and to statutes such as Title IX that required gender equity in educational programs, including sports. In the economy most women are in the paid labor force for much of their lives and a variety of new family forms have made the two-parent, one-earner family the exception. In a fast-paced, sophisticated society many early adolescents are asked to make decisions about sex, drugs and personal safety that were either hidden or reserved for older youth in the past. Though these same issues confront formal educators, many planners of youth development programs approach them from a perspective of reaching for what is best for one sex or the other. And these questions of how to enable girls to be prepared for meaningful careers, whether soccer for eleven-year-olds should be single-sex or mixed-sex and how boys should be involved in reducing adolescent pregnancy have important implications for the whole society.

Unfortunately, there is no comparative sociology of youth organizations to provide definitive answers to the question of what difference gender does or should make in youth development programs. Also, differences of opinion about the ideal roles of women and men will always result in differences of opinion about what constitutes "positive youth development" for each sex. But 71 percent of eighth graders participate in activities outside of school (National Center for Education Statistics [NELS:88], 1990, Table 3.4 [p. 55]) that would be classified as youth development programs, so together the sponsoring organizations represent a significant force in young people's lives. Increased attention to early adolescents by both the research and policy communities during the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s and early 1990s provides a basis from which to examine the issues about gender in youth development programs.

"Youth development programs" as discussed in this paper are structured activities and opportunities sponsored by organizations other than schools and offered outside of school hours. In addition to youth organizations, museums, parks, adult service organizations, musical and other arts organizations, churches and synagogues and grassroots community organizations offer such opportunities. Though many youth organizations are in the private nonprofit sector, city parks and for-profit computer

and summer camps are part of the base to be discussed. Many of these organizations offer programs for people of all ages but the clear focus for this paper is early adolescence, about ages 10 to 15.

The discussion is organized by several questions and assumes that planners of youth development programs are interested both in promoting what helps early adolescents to develop into self-assured individuals who contribute to the society and in assuring that this process benefits all the potential young participants whatever their sex, color, nationality, culture or income. The questions are: How similar or different are girls and boys at early adolescence? What is the history and current status of youth organizations when it comes to gender? What gender issues affect the informal education and enrichment offered by youth development programs? What are the implications of our current understanding of the effects of gender for planners of youth development programs? What difference does it make whether youth development programs are offered in mixed-sex or single-sex settings? And finally, what are the priorities for research in understanding the significance of gender in youth development programs?

I. How similar or different are girls and boys at early adolescence?

Overall the available research suggests that girls and boys are much more similar than different in biology and attitudes, especially prior to puberty. That is, if we took early adolescents out of a cultural context in which gender is very important, there would be little reason to treat them differently or to make conscious use of gender in youth development programs.

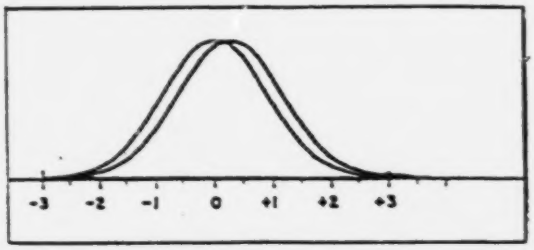
A. Cognition and Performance

For many years the conventional wisdom had it that girls and boys were inherently suited to different types of thinking and performance. In mathematics, especially, boys seemed to have an advantage over girls. Recent research suggests that, with some very specialized exceptions such as mental rotation activities in spatial tasks, girls and boys are very similar in their spatial and quantitative abilities and the underlying structure of their thinking about mathematics (Jacklin, 1989; Keating, 1990; Linn & Hyde, 1989). The research also indicates a pattern of convergence in performance in mathematics, so that girls and boys perform about equally well on math tests through early adolescence (Lapointe, Mead & Phillips, 1989, p. 18; Leder, 1990, p. 13; Mullis, Dossey, Owen & Phillips, 1991, p. 85) and increasingly through about tenth grade (Viadero, 1991), when more boys than girls do well, especially in problem-solving (Linn & Hyde) and higher levels of performance (Mullis et al., pp. 85,

135), some or all of which may be attributable to boys taking more advanced math courses. By twelfth grade the gender difference in mathematics performance favoring boys is somewhat more pronounced among African American and Hispanic students (Mullis et al., 1991, p. 85).

Researchers in recent years have conducted "meta-analysis," a method for synthesizing the results of several studies to show the magnitude of gender differences. Meta-analyses conducted by several researchers and reported by Linn (in press) indicate that gender accounts for a very small and declining proportion of the variation in mathematical and spatial ability. The measure d, often referred to as "effect size," shows how far apart the group means are in standard deviation units. By convention, gender differences favoring females are reported as positive values and gender differences favoring males are reported as negative values. In mathematical ability the effect size favoring males was -0.31 in studies conducted in 1973 or earlier and had declined to -0.14 in studies conducted in 1974 or later (Linn, in press, citing Hyde, Fennema & Lamon, 1990). Analyses of spatial ability indicate that the effect size favoring boys declined from -0.30 in studies published in 1973 or before to -0.13 in studies conducted in 1974 or after (Linn, citing Feingold, in press). As illustrated in Figure 1, with an effect size of 0.25 or smaller the variation among girls and the variation among boys is far greater than the variation between girls and boys.

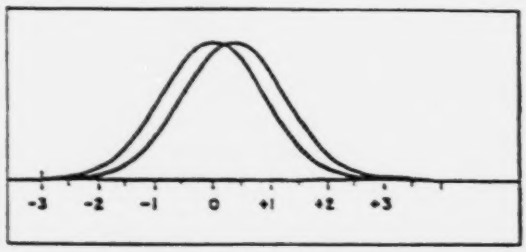
Figure 1



Normal distributions with means differing by 0.25 standard deviation

The difference (d = 0.25) between these distributions approximates the effect size of the gender difference favoring boys in spatial abilities. The gender difference favoring boys in mathematical ability and the gender difference favoring girls in verbal ability are even smaller than this according to recent studies.

A few boys have a slight advantage over girls in spatial abilities, but most girls have abilities similar to those of most boys in this area. In math, reading and writing, gender is a poor predictor of who does well; girls and boys have virtually the same range of abilities.



Normal distributions with means differing by 0.5 standard deviation

The difference (d = 0.50) between these distributions approximates the effect size of the gender difference favoring boys in physical aggression, or favoring girls in likelihood of not helping when others are available to help.

Boys are somewhat more likely than girls to behave aggressively, but many girls act as aggressively as boys do. Girls are somewhat less likely than boys to help a person when someone else could help, but many girls will help even when another person is available.

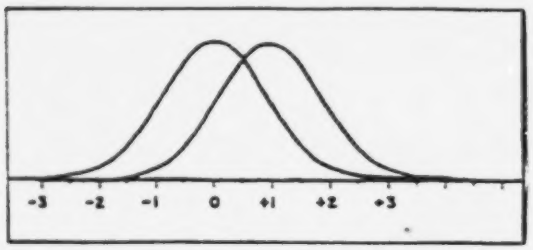
In cross-national studies, again, there currently is no gender gap in mathematical proficiency at age 13; in a study involving several nations and Canadian provinces, the average score for girls was slightly but not significantly higher in five groups, the average score for boys was slightly but not significantly higher in five other groups and in two groups--Korea and Spain--there was a significant difference favoring boys. (Lapointe et al., 1989, p. 19). Interpreting meta-analyses and related studies, researchers suggest that the closing of the gender gap in mathematical ability and spatial reasoning primarily is attributable to a closing of the gap in the relative experience of males and females in mathematics courses and tasks that require skill in spatial visualization (Baenninger & Newcombe, 1989; Linn). Although some investigators have proposed that the magnitude of sex differences in spatial abilities increases at puberty (e.g., Waber, 1976), others have found little support for this hypothesis (Linn & Petersen, 1985; Lueptow, 1984; Newcombe & Baenninger, 1989).

In science in the United States more boys than girls do well, the differences increase with age and the size of the gap has remained fairly stable for many years (Linn, in press). On the National Assessment of Educational Progress there has been little change in the gender gap for students ages 9 and 13, although the difference at age 17 declined from an effect size of -0.42 (favoring males) in 1978 to an effect size of -0.31 in 1986 (Educational Testing Service Policy Information Center [ETS], 1989; Linn). More boys than girls enroll in physics and chemistry and more boys than girls have experience in science in informal contexts, factors interpreted to mean that experience rather than differences in cognitive structure accounts for the gap (Linn & Hyde, 1989). As in the United States, cross-national studies indicate that the gender gap in science proficiency remains, while the gap in mathematics has disappeared. In a cross-sectional study conducted by Lapointe and his colleagues (1989) the gender difference in science proficiency at age 13 was statistically significant in all groups except two--the United Kingdom and the United States--and the largest difference between boys and girls, favoring boys, was in Korea, where the difference was 40 scale points. Many of the cross-national differences were considerably larger than the gender differences and statistically significant; for example, the average score in British Columbia was 73 points higher than in the United States and 83 points higher than the lowest scoring group, French-speaking New Brunswick (Lapointe et al., p. 36). Although gender accounts for a small proportion of the variation in science knowledge and skill, the difference seems to be stable over time and across cultures and to be attributable in large measure to gender differences in contact with science in formal and informal learning environments.

It was often assumed that girls have an inherent advantage in verbal abilities, including reading and writing, but this too seems from recent research to have scant support. Though somewhat more girls do well in national tests of reading and especially writing (ETS, 1989), meta-analyses indicate that the effect size favoring females declined from a small 0.24 in studies conducted prior to 1974 to an even smaller 0.10 in studies conducted after 1984 (cf. Figure 1) (Linn, in press). Recent syntheses of research based on meta-analyses, standardized tests and college admissions tests suggest that the gender gap in verbal ability has declined essentially to zero, leaving little room for a belief in underlying differences in cognitive structure (Keating, 1990; Linn; Linn & Hyde, 1989).

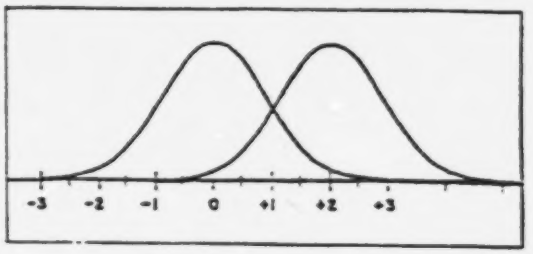
Though the evidence suggests that the sexes are essentially similar in cognitive structure, popular expectations that some students are more suited than others to learning in math, science and reading probably help to perpetuate differences in performance. For example, teachers who expect boys more than girls and white students more than students of color to be good at math may be perpetuating differences by assigning more boys and white students to accelerated learning groups. Jeannie Oakes and her colleagues (1990) found evidence that at schools with large concentrations of low-income and non-Asian minority students, teachers disproportionately judged their math and science students to be of low ability, contributing to a pattern of limited access to math and science learning for these groups. On the 1990 National Assessment of Educational Progress in mathematics the average performance for boys in eighth grade was 266 and for girls 264, a small difference; yet 22 percent of boys and only 14 percent of girls strongly agreed with the statement "I am very good at mathematics" (Mullis et al., 1991, pp. 85, 205). Hyde, Fennema and Lamon (1990, cited in Linn, in press), report an effect size of -1.27 (cf. Figure 2) on the perception of mathematics as a male domain; that is, a much higher proportion of males than females consider math to be a male domain and this difference in perception far exceeds the measured gender differences in math, science or spatial reasoning. Though more students of European and Asian descent than of African, Latino/Latina or Native American heritage currently perform well in math, science and verbal tests (National Science Board, 1987, p. 22), some of these average differences have declined in recent years (ETS, 1990, p. 2) and most researchers have concluded that neither sex nor color is related to the underlying cognitive structure of early adolescents (Keating, 1990, pp. 63, 79).

Figure 2



Normal distributions with means differing by 1.0 standard deviation

The difference (d = 1.0) between these distributions approximates the effect size of the gender difference in boys' perception of mathematics as a male domain. *Some girls and even more boys think of math as more appropriate for boys than for girls, but most girls and boys think that both boys and girls can and should do math.* Notice that the gender difference in this attitude is larger than the gender difference in math abilities.



Normal distributions with means differing by 2.0 standard deviations

The difference (d = 2.0) between these distributions is somewhat less than the average difference in the adult height of women and men. *Most adult males are taller than most adult females, but some women are taller than some men.*

The concept of aggression is another dimension often thought to reflect inherent differences between males and females, with males being more aggressive, and for that reason it is discussed here rather than with other psychological characteristics. More than with cognitive abilities, the gender differences in aggression seem to be small to moderate but persistent across several forms of measurement, ages and study designs (Hyde, 1986, p. 51; Maccoby, 1990, p. 513). Levels of aggression vary considerably among individuals, so that many girls are more aggressive than many boys. Janet Hyde reports an effect size of -0.53 (favoring males) in aggression in studies conducted prior to 1974 and a smaller effect size of -0.41 for studies conducted between 1978 and 1981, though other investigators (Eagly & Steffen, 1986, cited in Linn & Hyde, 1989) found no relationship between the date of a study and the size of the gender difference. The effect size in meta-analysis of studies of children was a somewhat higher -0.64 (Linn & Hyde). Eagly and Steffen conducted meta-analyses and reported a larger gender difference favoring males in physical aggression (effect size of -0.40) than in psychological aggression (effect size of -0.18). In a study of six cultures the mean score on a measure of aggressive behavior was consistently higher for boys than girls (Whiting, Whiting and Longabaugh, 1975, p. 147). Again, socialization and experience apparently affect the expression of aggression. A study in Kenya reported that boys who had no sisters the appropriate age and were assigned more indoor chores than other

boys also were observed to be less aggressive (Ember, 1973, cited in Whiting et al.).

A characteristic often associated with girls and women is nurturance or the quality of helping and caring for other people. Whiting and Edwards re-analyzed data from eleven countries and concluded that "we are the company we keep"--individuals, male or female, who spend much time with infants become more nurturant (Whiting & Edwards, 1988, cited in Jacklin, 1989; cf. Marsh, 1989). Linn and Hyde (1989) reviewed meta-analyses of studies on helping others and reported an overall effect size, favoring males, of -0.34, explaining that males tend to help when helping is consistent with the male role, for example when helping is potentially dangerous or when help is not asked for (effect size of -0.55). The relatively small gender differences in helping behavior of females also are consistent with female roles; for example, females are likely not to help (effect size of -0.42) when there are others who could help instead. Once again the story is much more one of gender similarity than difference; and individual variation is affected by the context or situation being studied.

B. Physical Development

Before birth and for the first few months of life the level of sex steroid activity is high, followed by a period of low activity until middle childhood (Brooks-Gunn & Reiter, 1990, p. 21; Kreipe & Sahler, 1991, pp. 24-25). Girls begin the pubertal growth spurt at a mean age of 9.6 years, six to twelve months before breast budding, at a mean age of 10.5 years. Pubic hair begins to develop shortly after, or in some girls before, the breasts. Menarche (first menstruation) occurs at an average age of 12.5 in the United States but with a range from 10.5 to 15.5 or older. Menarche occurs fairly late in the process of development, after the peak in the rate of attaining adult height (Brooks-Gunn & Reiter; Tanner, 1972; cf. Kreipe & Sahler, pp. 43, 51-53.).

In boys the first sign of puberty is testicular growth at about 11 to 11.5 years. Spermarche, the onset of the release of spermatozoa, occurs between ages 12 and 14, prior to the peak of the growth spurt at age 13 or 14 years. The penis increases in length and breadth and fairly late in the process the glans develops and the scrotal skin darkens. Pubic hair approximates adult appearance late in the process (Brooks-Gunn & Reiter, 1990; cf. Kreipe & Sahler, 1991, pp. 53-55).

Since the growth spurt begins and achieves maximum velocity earlier in the pubertal process in girls than boys, girls are often taller than boys at early stages of adolescence. Girls on average stop the spurt in growth by age 17, boys by age 20 (Brooks-Gunn & Reiter, 1990; Kreipe & Sahler, 1991, pp. 38-39). By about age 15 boys on average are taller and heavier than girls. Responding to the production of androgens, the male sex steroids, average upper

body strength is increased in boys more than in girls (Hudson, 1978; Kreipe & Sahler, p. 39). Provided that nutrition is adequate, there seem to be few ethnic differences in the timing of pubertal processes (Brooks-Gunn & Reiter; but cf. Kreipe & Sahler, p. 52).

In a large-scale meta-analysis investigators of gender similarities and differences in motor performance concluded that prior to puberty only one of twenty tasks, throwing, was sufficiently different by gender to be thought to have a biological component (Thomas, French, Thomas & Gallagher, 1988, p. 189). Differences in other skills were considered small enough to be attributable to different treatment of girls and boys by peers, parents, teachers and coaches. These same investigators reported that from puberty on to adulthood the physical differences in height and muscle development favoring males become much more significant. For example, the effect size of the gender difference favoring males in adult height is -2.86, or about four times the gender difference in cognitive abilities (cf. Figure 2) (Thomas & French, 1985, cited in Linn & Hyde, 1989). Women often hold world's records in long-distance swimming and mushing by virtue of their generally greater endurance; similarly, female endurance cyclists and triathletes are rapidly catching up with their male competitors (Nelson, 1991). Continuing outstanding performances by female athletes in recent years have narrowed the gender gap in other events where height and and muscle mass are not critical, such as sprint swimming and running (Guttmann, 1991, p. 252; Nelson). These narrowing gaps suggest that girls more than boys and women more than men have less often developed to their full physical potential. Although after puberty average size and upper body strength are greater in males than females (Kreipe & Sahler, 1991, pp. 38-39), the likelihood is that with continued encouragement of girls and young women the previous gender differences in strength, endurance and physical skills will continue to decline.

Especially during early adolescence young people at the same chronological age may beat quite different stages of pubertal development and thus of dramatically different sizes and shapes. The physical and psychological effects of maturational timing, as well as gender, are important to understanding and planning programs for young teens.

To summarize, through early adolescence and beyond girls and boys are more similar than different in cognitive structure and academic performance. Prior to puberty they also are quite similar in physical development, with the differences in performance of motor skills probably more attributable to practice and opportunity than to a biological gender difference. After puberty boys on average are larger and have more upper body strength. Based on cognitive and physical development alone there would be little reason to program separately or differently for girls and boys through early adolescence; gender and racial and ethnic heritage account for a

very small proportion of the variation among individuals. To complicate matters even more, many authorities argue that experience can influence brain development (Petersen & Hood, 1988), hormone levels (Jacklin, 1989) and other aspects of physical development; the causal connections are interactive rather than from physical to emotional and behavioral factors. In fact, girls and boys are treated differently and they have different life experiences. Before accepting any idea that gender can be ignored in youth development, we move to explore four further areas: attitudes, emotions and beliefs; gender stereotypes; interests, concerns and skills; and behavior and risks.

C. Attitudes, Emotions and Beliefs

The collection of actual and potential changes during early adolescence--changing body, new schools, more responsibility, changing adult reactions, changes or stresses from the family or community context, high expectations for coping with complex pressures--makes early adolescence a potentially stressful time for both girls and boys (Benson, 1990; Benson, Williams & Johnson, 1987; Brooks-Gunn & Ruble, 1983; Crockett & Petersen, 1987; Petersen and Crockett, 1985; Simmons & Blyth, 1987; Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents, 1989). In recent years research has explored how this collection of changes affects the way early adolescents think about themselves. As children grow to early adolescence they become intellectually (cognitively) capable of more sophisticated and reflective thinking about themselves. With the capacity to think about the self comes a preoccupation with doing so, in early adolescence thinking about the fact of existence as a self and increasingly in middle adolescence about the character of the self, or identity. With the capacity and preoccupation also come the evaluation of the self, or self-esteem. Investigators have noted many domains that affect the self-image of adolescents--that one of the tasks of adolescence is integrating the several selves one may be, for example, with peers, parents, in school and in athletic contexts.

Harter defines global self-esteem as how much one likes, accepts or respects the self as a person (1990, p. 366) and notes that self-esteem depends on how the individual and important other people evaluate one on domains considered important. For example, academic performance influences global self-esteem primarily for people who think it is important that they do well in school. Most research indicates that among adolescents physical appearance is the largest contributor to global self-esteem (Harter; Koff, Rierdan & Stubbs, 1990; Richards, Boxer, Petersen & Albrecht, 1990), with peer acceptance being the next most influential domain (Harter, p. 367). Physical appearance, particularly body image and weight, have been found to contribute more directly to self-esteem among girls than boys; and more girls than boys have been found to be dissatisfied with their bodies, leading to lower self-esteem (Attie, Brooks-Gunn & Petersen, 1990; Harter, p. 367; Koff et al.;

Offer, Ostrov, Howard & Atkinson, 1988; Richards et al.; Simmons & Blyth, 1987.)

The relationship between timing of puberty and body image is slightly different for girls and boys. Among boys early maturation is considered positive--the sooner one develops a taller, more muscular build the better. Maturing late, especially among boys of lower economic levels for whom a masculine build is an important part of the culture and individuals for whom physical appearance is especially important to self-esteem, is likely to be stressful for boys. By contrast, being "on time"--at about the same level of development as one's friends and classmates--seems to be the least stressful for most girls (Brooks-Gunn & Reiter, 1990; Crockett & Petersen, 1987). Girls who mature early are also likely to emerge from adolescence relatively shorter and heavier, while those who mature late will end up taller and leaner. The late maturers are those who most closely approximate the current standard of female beauty as very thin and with small hips and breasts so that it is often the late maturers who are most satisfied with their final body image. Dancers and some other athletes whose daily training uses a great deal of energy and who restrict food intake, usually to stay below weight, tend both to mature later (Malina, 1988) and to have positive attitudes toward late, rather than "on time" maturation (Brooks-Gunn & Warren, 1985).

Recent research suggests that pubertal timing may be a factor in a reversal in the gender effect for depression in early adolescence. During childhood more boys than girls are reported as experiencing mental health problems, including depression (Petersen, Sarigiani & Kennedy, 1991) but among adults more women than men experience depression. Pubertal development seems to be especially stressful for early maturing girls, who also are more likely than other girls and almost all boys to change schools during the early stages of their development. This "synchronicity of pubertal timing and school change" is an important part of a model that accounts for gender differences in depression by 12th grade, with girls more at risk for depression than boys (Petersen et al.).

The cultural importance of physical attractiveness for women, including the conflict between maturation and ideal body type for girls, is an important factor in normal development, especially for white and middle-to-upper income girls (Attie et al., 1990; Dornbusch et al., 1984, cited in Brumberg, 1989, p. 33). This cultural milieu also is a contributing factor in the prevalence of eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia (Brumberg), though the direct causes of these disorders are complex and the relative contribution of several factors to the onset of eating disorders has not yet become clear in the research (Attie et al.; Brumberg; Steiner-Adair, 1989).

It is difficult from existing research to know how alarmed to be about the self-image of girls in early and middle adolescence.

Widely quoted research by Gilligan (1982) and her colleagues (Gilligan, Lyons & Hanmer, 1989) argues that girls are confident at age 11 but tentative and forlorn by 15. Survey research undertaken by the American Association of University Women [AAUW] (1991) reports lower self-esteem among girls than boys in elementary school with an increasing gender gap at middle school and high school and less than a third of girls thinking well of themselves in high school. In a recent nationally representative study, 31 percent of boys but 44 percent of girls were rated as having a low self-concept (NELS:88, 1990). Still, many studies suggest that most adolescents emerge from adolescence with a reasonably positive self-concept (Marsh, 1989; Simmons, Blyth & McKinney, 1983). Harter (1990) has shown that for students making the transition from elementary (6th grade) to junior high school (7th grade) self-esteem was predicted by the students' reported changes in competency in domains they cared about and changes in social support. Specifically, self-esteem increased among students who reported increases in competencies and support from parents, peers and others. This suggests that though there is reason to be concerned about risks to self-image of early adolescents, especially girls and especially early-maturing girls, there is nothing inevitable or universal about an early adolescent decline in self-regard.

The issues are even more complex for youth of color in the United States, who must balance between the value systems of their own group and the majority culture. Minority youth confront negative racial stereotypes and often poverty, which have the potential to distort self-images (Spencer & Dornbusch, 1990). Yet self-esteem is not necessarily lower among minority youth, since the appraisals of the larger society may be deemed less important than and be countered by positive support from other sources of social support--peers, teachers, parents--and other domains--school, home, academic achievement, sports (Harter, 1990; Spencer & Dornbusch). African American youth, in particular, consistently have been found to have levels of self-esteem comparable to the levels of white youth (Harter, citing others, p. 369) or significantly higher (AAUW, 1991; NELS:88, 1990). Strong support for youth in the African American community, perhaps providing a filtering mechanism against racist messages, and basing self-esteem on somewhat different attributes are two factors considered important. Some studies have found that youth in racially segregated schools and functioning in cohesive African American communities are more likely to have high self-esteem than those in racially integrated schools (Harter, citing others). Consistent with the theories of multiple sources of stress and change, the risk to self-esteem of African American adolescents seems especially great if they are from low-income or one-parent families and attend integrated schools in which the majority of students are from higher-income and two-parent families. Some evidence indicates that many African American young men maintain a positive self-image by substituting such attributes as musical talent or sports prowess for academic

performance in the values they use to estimate their worth (Harter, p. 370). Taylor (1989) notes that negative school experiences force many black young men to resort to such distancing strategies that enable them to maintain positive self-esteem. Some analysts have found that some African American young women use a white standard of beauty and see themselves as falling short (Phinney, Lochner & Murphy, forthcoming, cited in Spencer and Dornbusch). Yet one can also speculate that many African American girls experience in their community a more balanced female ideal, less dependent on physical appearance and a lean body than the ideal of popular culture and higher-income whites, that provides some protection for self-regard and may account for the lack of decline in self-esteem among many of them.

Many ethnic minority youth confront issues of biculturalism and assimilation as they develop identities during adolescence. There may be pressure from parents to retain cultural values and language, from white peers and institutions to blend in with the majority culture and from peers of the same ethnic background to eschew "acting white." Some research indicates that Southeast Asian and Chinese students may especially perceive these issues as conflicts (Spencer & Dornbusch, 1990, pp. 131-133, citing others). Martinez and Dukes (1991) found that racial/ethnic background and gender may interact in effects on the self-esteem of American youth. They found that black females and males, Chicanas and Chicanos, and white males were all above the grand mean on the variable of satisfaction with self in their multicultural sample of 7th through 12th graders and they concluded that community support may be insulating black and Chicano and Chicana youth from some of the effects of racism. Martinez and Dukes also reported that within each race or category (with the exception of black females in one of the two years of the study), females were lower than their male counterparts in satisfaction with self, with Asian females the least satisfied group, followed by white and Native American females. As they predicted, black females and Chicanas had the highest levels of satisfaction with self among females. In the national survey of eighth graders (NELS:88, 1990), a high proportion of black students scored high on self-concept, with other racial/ethnic groups, including whites, scoring somewhat lower and similar to each other. Low self-concept was associated with low grades, low educational expectation and limited proficiency in English.

D. Gender Stereotypes

Second-graders and even preschoolers have been found to have consistently high scores on "knowledge" tests of gender stereotypes (Signorella, 1987). Between ages three and seven children attain "gender constancy" (Stangor & Ruble, 1987), the understanding that a girl is a girl whatever clothing she wears and, closely associated, "gender stability," the understanding that a girl will grow up to be a woman, not a man. Research has shown that

children's preference for same-sex-stereotyped objects and behaviors increases with the attainment of gender constancy (Signorella, citing others). At the same time, children who have attained constancy also seem to be more flexible in sex-role attitudes, being more likely to say that "both men and women" can engage in behaviors traditionally associated with one gender. The pervasiveness of knowledge about sex stereotypes and the active pursuit by young children of gender "correctness" of toys and behavior as they develop help to explain gender differences in life experiences. Investigators consistently find that stereotypes of all varieties tend to be used in new or ambiguous situations--people rely on their own previous beliefs to organize new information and to reduce uncertainty (Lockheed, 1985a); and in a society in which gender is such a conspicuous organizing principle, there is evidence that children use gender over other possible stereotypes to code new information (Bem, 1983).

Noting such factors as discouragement of girls from taking "tomboyishness" into adolescence, Hill and Lynch (1983) reviewed the evidence for a hypothesis of "gender intensification"--that adolescents, perhaps especially girls, are pressured to adopt more "gender-appropriate" attitudes and behaviors as their bodies change toward adult form. Interestingly, the evidence for "gender intensification" is mixed. Studies of sex role attitudes have fairly consistently found that boys on average have more traditional views of women's roles than do girls (Galambos, Petersen, Richards & Gitelson, 1985; Herzog, Bachman & Johnston, 1983; Tittle, 1981) and that the discrepancy is greatest at adolescence (Benson & Vincent, 1980, cited in Galambos et al.). A similar discrepancy has been found on attitudes toward division of labor within the home, with more boys than girls holding traditional attitudes (Galambos et al.; Herzog et al.; Tittle). Studies indicate that more boys than girls think boys are smarter and more competent than girls; more girls than boys think girls are equal or better; for example, although only three percentage points or less divided girls and boys in math proficiency on the eighth grade National Assessment of Educational Progress in 1990, 22 percent of the boys and only 9 percent of the girls agreed or were undecided on the statement "mathematics is more for boys than for girls" (Mullis et al., 1991). Both girls and boys are aware that boys are more valued by society (Stangor & Ruble, 1987). Some research suggests that adolescents' own sex-role orientation becomes more salient at adolescence but also less stereotyped. That is, on inventories of "masculine" and "feminine" characteristics, boys at adolescence checked off a greater number of both masculine and feminine characteristics than younger boys did; girls similarly checked both more feminine and more masculine characteristics than younger girls did (Crockett, Camarena & Petersen, n.d.). Galambos and her colleagues found that girls (but not boys) with more egalitarian attitudes toward women had better self-images; they speculated that girls with more traditional attitudes toward women and poorer self-image might be limiting

their aspirations. Theoretical work on the development and functioning of gender roles suggests that some children much more than others rely on gender to sort and store information--that gender can be more or less salient as an organizing principle in people's thinking (Bem, 1983; Katz, 1987). Work on the causes and correlates of gender schemata continues.

On a variety of attitudes there is very little gender difference at early adolescence. For example, boys and girls are generally similar in rating the importance of an interesting career, the likelihood and importance of being married and how much they are pushed to do well in school (Girl Scouts of the United States of America, 1990b). However, studies indicate that more boys than girls say that making money would be an important reason for choosing a job (Benson et al., 1987; Girl Scouts, 1990b). For example, in the Girl Scouts study (p. 78) 40 percent of boys and 21 percent of girls said that the most important reason for choosing their future job was the possibility of making a lot of money; 22 percent of boys and 31 percent of girls said personal satisfaction was the most important and 6 percent of boys and 14 percent of girls said helping others was most important. Still, factors other than gender such as age and socioeconomic circumstances can account for as much of the variance as gender. In the same study conducted for Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., students living in poverty gave as the mostimportant reason for choosing their future job making money (46%) or helping others (16%), with personal satisfaction lagging behind (9%). More girls than boys espouse altruism and community involvement (Benson, 1990; Girl Scouts, 1990b; Offer et al., 1988) and more boys than girls express hedonistic values (Benson; Offer et al.). Benson reports that prosocial values decline from 6th to 12th grades among both boys and girls, but more dramatically among boys.

To summarize, girls and boys are similar in attitudes, emotions and beliefs on many subjects. The greater importance placed on physical appearance of women and the earlier physical maturation of girls than boys seem to be implicated in problems of self-image among more girls than boys. Young people are knowledgeable about gender role stereotypes and tend to have stereotyped views, with boys holding more traditional views than girls. Consistent with stereotypes, more girls than boys espouse altruistic values and more boys than girls espouse hedonistic values.

E. Interests, Concerns and Skills

The ways adolescents use their time, the things they enjoy doing, talk or worry about and are good at are subject to many influences. Individual abilities, the income and lifestyle of family members, the region of the country and a host of other factors affect the patterns of interests and concerns of early adolescents. Just as we expect more ice hockey players from Wisconsin than Florida and more future farmers from rural than urban communities, we expect

adolescents' preferences and skills to have been influenced by the attention to gender they encounter in their daily lives.

A variety of influences lead to uneven gender distributions of interest, concern and skill by early adolescence. First, much of children's time during middle childhood is spent in single-sex groups, both during play and other discretionary time and out of the classroom in school (Lockheed, 1985a; Maccoby, 1990), during which the activities, topics of conversation and patterns of interaction are likely to be different for girls and boys. Thus, by early adolescence boys and girls from the same neighborhoods and social backgrounds have had different experiences on account of gender.

Second, there is a great range among families and subcultures of the extent to which gender roles are consciously taught or enforced, as well as differences in the definitions and latitude of gender roles. The family, neighborhood and community affect the similarity or difference of experience of adolescents based on gender (Frederick & Nicholson, 1991; Hanna, 1988; Ianni, 1989; Jacklin, 1989).

Third, sex stereotyping is alive and prevalent in popular culture. Toys and activities for children are marketed in strongly gender-stereotyped ways and sex-"appropriate" toy choices are made by children beginning at very early ages (Block, 1982; Liben & Signorella, 1987; Miller, 1987, citing many others). Television programs and advertising continue to convey gender stereotypes, especially in children's programs and in the reruns of older programs that many children and early adolescents watch (Calvert & Huston, 1987; Carter, 1991). The idea that relationships between women and men are always sexual is conveyed in advertising everything from breakfast cereal to colas to toothpaste.

Fourth, youth development opportunities and the choices children and adolescents make from among these opportunities may be sex-typed. The persistence of assumptions that girls and boys are interested in different things may perpetuate actual differences in interests and skills: for example, providing girls with many opportunities to learn to cook and boys with many opportunities to develop the basic skills of baseball.

Whether from these four forces or others, by the time young people reach early adolescence there are recognizable differences by gender in the distribution of interests and skills. The gender gap in the distribution of many of these interests and skills is enormous compared to the small and declining gender differences in cognitive and physical abilities. The styles of play of groups of boys and groups of girls on school playgrounds and in neighborhoods mean that more boys than girls have experience in larger groups, formally structured settings, formal competition and rule-bound games; more girls than boys have experience in smaller groups and

with accommodating group activities to meet the needs of individual participants (Benen-son, 1990; Lever, 1976; Maccoby, 1990). More boys than girls spend time with video games and other media that portray violence and physical risk, and have practice and skill in using construction tools (Matyas & Kahle, 1986; Medrich, 1991; Medrich, Roizen, Rubin & Buckley, 1982).

More girls than boys spend assigned or chosen time in caring for younger children and more girls have skill and experience in nurturing (Maccoby, 1990; Medrich, 1991; Medrich et al., 1982; Whiting et al., 1975). For example, in the national survey of eighth graders (NELS:88, 1990, p. 57) 58 percent of girls, but only 6 percent of boys, had earned money babysitting. In many families the assignment of chores is sex-typed, with more girls than boys gaining experience in food preparation, clothing maintenance, cleaning and child care and more girls than boys spending significant hours per week in such activities (Medrich, 1991). More boys than girls have experience in lawn care. Again from the national survey of eighth graders (NELS:88, p. 57) 27 percent of boys but less than 3 percent of girls had earned money doing lawn work. Boys were also much more likely than girls to have earned money in newspaper routes, farm or other manual labor and in a combined category of food service and other odd jobs (NELS:88, p. 57).

An estimated 20 million of the 45 million young people ages 6 to 18 participate in nonschool sports (Martens, 1988). Between 1977 and 1984 the proportion of girls among this number increased from 38 to 41 percent and presumably is still rising, so once again the gender gap is narrowing rapidly. Within this context more boys than girls experience pressure to be physically able, to be interested in team sports, to have keen eye-hand coordination, and to take physical risks and demonstrate physical prowess and lack of fear (Bredemeier, 1988; Duquin, 1988). More girls than boys experience pressure to be physically attractive, graceful and poised and more girls than boys participate in gymnastics, dance, baton twirling and other activities that emphasize aesthetics in movement (Duquin; Martens; Seefeldt, Ewing & Walk, 1991). More girls than boys spend time discussing, learning about and practicing grooming and "beauty" (Medrich, 1991; Miller, 1987).

In same-gender groups girls tend to develop cooperative styles of interaction, to tone down their own demands in the interest of preserving the social interaction and to express agreement when another girl speaks (Benenson, 1990; Leaper, 1991; Maccoby, 1990, citing many others). Girls do pursue their own ends but reduce the dominance and coercion in the process (Sheldon, 1989, cited in Maccoby, 1990; see also Knight & Chao, 1989). Boys in same-gender groups are more likely to interrupt one another, to command or threaten, to boast or top another's story and to refuse to comply with another person's demand (Leaper; Maccoby, 1990). This more dominant style is concerned with protecting turf and with not

showing weakness to other men and boys (Knight & Chao; Maccoby, 1990). Lockheed (1985b) and others have found that in the absence of other cues as to who should lead, leadership is likely to devolve to participants who have higher status in the larger society--males over females, whites over participants of color and participants of higher over participants of lower socio-economic status. Perhaps as a result of boys' greater assertiveness, they tend to have more influence in mixed-gender groups (Grant, 1985; Lockheed, 1985b; Wilkinson, Lindow & Chiang, 1985). The research on girls' responses in mixed gender groups is less clear, with indications that they may adopt more assertive styles, continue to facilitate inclusiveness, or become more passive and uncomfortable (Bernard, 1981; Hall & Sandler, 1982; Maccoby, 1990; M. Sadker & D. Sadker, 1988; Sandler, 1987). Jacklin (1989), Leaper (1991) and Maccoby (1988, 1990) have noted that much more research is needed to sort out the influences of age, context and the gender of partners in understanding gender patterns of communication and influence.

The occupational world is strongly sex-segregated (Stockard & McGee, 1990; Waldman, 1985). Studies of all age groups, from young children through adolescents, support the persistence of gender-typing of job aspirations and preferences (Girls Clubs of America, 1985b; Hedin, Erickson, Simon & Walker, 1984; Liben & Signorella, 1987; Schulenberg, Goldstein & Vondracek, 1991). More boys than girls express interest in a job or career in construction, science, engineering, law enforcement and outdoor work; more girls than boys express interest in a job or career in teaching, nursing, youth work, fashion, and clerical or sales work (Crow-ley & Shapiro, 1984; NELS:88, 1990; Pelavin & Kane, 1990; Schulenberg et al.; Tittle, 1981). The sex-typing of some professional careers--lawyer, physician, veterinarian, journalist--has virtually disappeared since the 1970s (Schulenberg et al., p. 39, citing others). Somewhat more girls than boys express interest in careers not traditional for their gender (Stockard & McGee), though a study of fourth graders (Stockard & McGee) suggests boys may be more willing than girls to change their preferences based on perceived positive characteristics of a female sex-typed job. Parents' education, socioeconomic status, career certainty and several other factors have been shown to mediate the effects of gender typing (Gottfred-son, 1981; Sandberg, Erhardt, Mellins, Ince & Meyer-Bahlburg, 1987, 1991; Schulenberg et al.) but the main effect of gender so far has remained very strong. Most of the literature suggests that adolescents have little concrete knowledge about particular careers (Girls Clubs of America, 1985b; Tittle) and that they have very little practice in thinking about how they will combine careers with family roles (Archer, 1985; Farmer, 1983; Galambos et al., 1985; Tittle).

Overall more girls than boys express high educational aspirations, though the gender differences often are only a few percentage points (Bachman, Johnston & O'Malley, forthcoming; Benson, 1990;

Shapiro & Crowley, 1980). In the national survey of eighth graders boys were more likely than girls to say they would not complete high school and girls were more likely to say they would attend graduate school (NELS:88, 1990, Table 4.7 [p. 71]). Benson (1990) also found more girls than boys had high educational aspirations. Overall the educational aspirations of eighth graders are high, with two-thirds expecting to attend college (NELS:88, pp. 69, 71).

F. Behavior and Risks

The societal concern for the welfare of adolescents is well-founded. The risk to adolescents in the United States comes not so much from any inherent "storm and stress" that goes with growing up as from external stresses and threats that too many adolescents are expected to confront and cope with. Based on a thorough review of the literature Dryfoos (1990) estimated that one-fourth of the youth population aged 10 to 17 is "in dire need of assistance because they are at risk of engaging in multiple problem behaviors" (p. 244) and another one-fourth practices risky behaviors to a lesser degree (p. 245). The risky behaviors Dryfoos emphasizes--delinquency, unprotected sexual intercourse, substance abuse and school failure--are widely regarded to be critical (Benson, 1990; Children's Defense Fund [CDF], 1987) to understanding the life chances of adolescents. Many of the predisposing factors are community-based, so that adolescents from poor school systems, crime-ridden neighborhoods or pockets of unemployment are more likely to be at risk. But personal and family characteristics also play a role and the gender basis of risk is important to consider.

During infancy and childhood boys are physically more vulnerable than girls and a higher proportion of girls than boys survive to adolescence (Jacklin, 1989; Office of Technology Assessment, 1991). Although death rates are lower among adolescents than other age groups and most teens report being at least moderately healthy, accidents, suicide, homicide, heart conditions, cancer and chronic conditions claim the lives of teens each year. (Dryfoos, 1990, p. 21). Among young people ages 12 to 17 in 1986 boys were about twice as likely as girls to die, with the death rate higher among African American boys and little difference between black and white girls. (Dryfoos, p. 21). Part of the gender difference comes from suicide, with boys ages 12 to 17 three to six times more likely to die as suicides than girls (Dryfoos, p. 22). Homicide claims a much higher proportion of black than of white young people, with black males especially at risk. Males, especially white males, are more likely to die in motor vehicle accidents (Gibbs, 1988b, p. 276).

As noted previously, more girls than boys are at risk for nutritionally-based disease, including obesity, anorexia nervosa and bulimia, and by early adolescence depression is more common among girls than boys (Brumberg, 1989; Petersen et al., 1991). Although boys are more likely to die as suicides, many reports

indicate that girls are more likely to consider suicide and to attempt it (Dryfoos, 1990, p. 22, citing several reports). More girls than boys report being victims of physical abuse and many more girls than boys report being victims of sexual abuse (Benson, 1990; Dryfoos). Benson (p. 29) reports that by twelfth grade 34 percent of girls and 15 percent of boys say they have been victims of at least one incident of physical or sexual abuse.

Some research suggests that more girls than boys respond to stress by withdrawing from social interaction and internalizing their distress, whereas more boys than girls respond to stress by "acting out," or disruptive behavior (Cramer, 1979, cited in Petersen et al., 1991). More boys than girls engage in physical fights (NELS:88, 1990, p. 45), are involved in serious offenses and are arrested for crimes; in 1986 78 percent of juvenile arrests were males (Dryfoos, 1990, p. 35), although 56 percent of teens charged with running away were females (Dryfoos, p. 35). African American youth are much more likely than white youth to be arrested, detained and convicted, with black males especially at risk (Dryfoos, p. 35). Studies of juvenile delinquency generally find that many more young people report engaging in illegal acts than are apprehended and that the risk of being apprehended for a given offense is higher for blacks (Dryfoos).

Although young women account for a lower proportion of juvenile arrests than young men, analysts of the juvenile justice system report that girls often receive harsher sentences and are more likely to be incarcerated for the same offense than boys (Chesney-Lind, 1982; Schwartz, Steketee & Schneider, 1990). A very high proportion of the young women in the juvenile justice system report backgrounds of having been physically, including sexually, abused (Chesney-Lind; Youth Policy and Law Center, 1982).

Boys and girls are about equally likely to report using harmful substances, with more boys than girls among heavy users of alcohol and illicit drugs (Girls Clubs of America, 1988a; Johnston, O'Malley & Bachman, 1991). Some research suggests that girls are especially likely to be influenced by peers' use of substances (Girls Clubs of America, 1988a). At early ages a higher proportion of white than black youth report use of harmful substances (Chaiken, 1990; Gibbs, 1988c, p. 12, Smith & Kennedy, 1991).

The average age at first sexual intercourse is lower for boys than for girls (even though girls mature sexually about two years ahead of boys on average) and lower among African American youth than youth of European descent (Card, Reagan & Ritter, 1988; Dryfoos, 1990, p. 72; Hayes, 1987; National Center for Health Statistics [NCHS], 1991, Sonenstein, Pleck & Ku, 1991). By age 15 about 27 percent of girls and a higher proportion of boys have had intercourse at least once (NCHS). The proportion of sexually active young people using contraception has increased in recent years, though the youngest teens are those least likely to use

effective contraception (Forrest & Singh, 1990; Hayes; Zabin, Hirsch, Smith, Streett & Hardy, 1986) and many of these are at high risk for sexually transmitted disease, including AIDS.

Girls' lives are much more likely to be dramatically affected by early pregnancy, and especially parenthood, than boys' lives. Through most of the 1980s there were about 10,000 births (Hayes, 1987, p. 75; NCHS, forthcoming, cited in Moore, 1992) and some 30,000 pregnancies annually to young women under age 15, virtually none of them intended (Hayes, p. 75; cf. Moore); in 1989 the number of births to these young teens was 11,486 (NCHS, forthcoming, cited in Moore). Young women who are doing well in school and expecting to go to college are more likely than young women doing poorly in school to have abortions as a response to pregnancy (Dryfoos, 1990, p. 75; Hayes, p. 116). Abortion also is more likely among the youngest teens, with 1.6 abortions for every birth to young women in this age group (Henshaw, 1991; cf. Hayes, p. 58). As further evidence of the relationship between early motherhood and underachievement, recent research indicates that young women who live in areas where incomes are below the poverty level and who have low basic skills are five to seven times more likely than young women who do not have low skills and are not from poverty areas to become mothers as teens (Sum, 1986, cited in CDF, 1987, p. 5). Within these categories, the rates of parenthood were virtually identical for black, Hispanic and white young women--that is, the combination of poverty and poor skills predicted early parenthood. Nearly 86 percent of young women who become mothers at age 15 are unmarried and otherwise face poor prospects for the future (Dryfoos, p. 70).

Several studies report that adolescents engaged in one form of risky behavior are likely to be involved in others. Young users of harmful substances are also more likely to be sexually active, and both behaviors are more characteristic of those not doing well in school (Benson, 1990; Dryfoos, 1990; Elliott & Morse, 1989). Not surprisingly, these behaviors are associated with involvement in the juvenile justice system. Especially it appears that young people who face multiple stresses and must face them without counterbalancing assets such as supportive parents, caring and achievement-oriented schools, other adults to turn to and involvement in the community are at high risk of being lost to themselves and society (Benson; Dryfoos). In our society youth of color, especially those growing up in inner cities, are especially likely to be facing multiple stresses.

II. How have issues of gender been addressed in youth organizations, past and present?

Issues of gender have been central to the development of some youth organizations and far less consciously addressed in others. New attention to gender issues has sometimes been thrust upon

organizations through litigation or political action addressing gender equity.

A. History of Youth Organizations

Several of the largest youth organizations in the United States followed a similar pattern of development. An organization for boys was established; later, sometimes considerably later, a similar but separate organization with a corresponding name was established to serve girls. This is the case with Boy Scouts of America (1910) and Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. (1912), YMCA of the U.S.A. (originally Young Men's Christian Association) (1851) and YWCA of the U.S.A. (1855), Boys Clubs of America (since 1990, Boys and Girls Clubs of America) (1906) and Girls Clubs of America (since 1990, Girls Incorporated) (1945) and Big Brothers (1903) and Big Sisters (1908) (since 1977, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America) (Erickson, 1989). Even 4-H Youth Development (1914), which as an official organization has always been coeducational, coalesced out of the corn clubs for boys and canning clubs for girls that were common in rural communities around the turn of the century (National 4-H Council, n.d.).

Organizations for girls consistently have had less funding and fewer resources than organizations for boys. Girls Incorporated tracked the funding patterns in nationally reported United Way resource allocations and found that the disparity decreased over time, reaching a ratio of about 2 to 1 in funding for boys' organizations versus girls' organizations in the early 1980s (Girls Clubs of America, 1985a; Polivy, 1982). Similarly, a review of grants made to youth organizations by private philanthropic organizations showed a 4-to-1 disparity favoring organizations for boys (Girls Clubs of America, 1985a; Polivy). In 1979 a study of ten community foundations by Women and Foundations/Corporate Philanthropy (Dykstra, 1979) found only ten grants had been awarded to programs for girls. More recently the increase in coeducational services in national youth organizations has made it difficult to obtain data on resource allocation by gender but presumably the patterns persist in allocations to remaining single-sex organizations. The salaries of youth workers are traditionally lower even than teachers' salaries and, with salaries in teaching, reflect the low value society places on work with children, much of it undertaken by women. Even within this context the salaries of youth workers who work with girls consistently are reported to be lower in most communities than the salaries of youth workers who work with boys or in coeducational situations (Girls Clubs of America, 1982). Although the reasons for the difference in resource allocation have not been systematically studied, three frequently mentioned mechanisms are (1) the preponderance of men, who may in addition be alumni of such organizations, in allocation decisions; (2) a pattern that fewer women than men are accustomed to giving money to charitable causes and those who do have not focused on their own gender and (3) the presumption that boys gone astray pose

a threat to society whereas girls gone astray are merely blameworthy, prompting greater attention to the social development of boys (Girls Clubs of America, 1982).

In the 1990-91 edition of the Directory of American Youth Organizations Erickson (1989) lists over 400 national nonprofit, adult-sponsored youth organizations for young people through high school age. In nearly every category of these organizations--comprehensive organizations for building character such as those above, organizations focused on career exploration or preparation such as Junior Achievement and Future Farmers of America, youth groups orga-nized by religious organizations such as Columbian Squires and B'nai B'rith Youth Organization, sports organizations such as Special Olympics International and Pop Warner Football, and hobby and special interest organizations such as International Federation of Children's Choirs and Clowns of America, Inc., there have been and continue to be both coeducational organizations and separate organizations for girls and boys.

The legal status of single-sex youth organizations is still at issue. One of the major tools for increasing sex equity in the school system was Title IX of the Education Act Amendments of 1972, outlawing sex discrimination in schools receiving federal funds. The United States Congress passed an amendment in 1974 exempting from the effects of Title IX the voluntary youth organizations that had traditionally been single-sex (Feldblum, Krent & Watkin, 1986). Nevertheless, successful suits against the Boys Club of Santa Cruz in California and Little League Baseball, Inc. in New Jersey charged that these organizations violated the state prohibition against sex discrimination in "public accommodations" such as hotels, restaurants and businesses and resulted in their being open to girls (Feldblum et al.). An Illinois court upheld a rule that prohibited boys from participating in all-girl sports teams but allowed girls to participate on boys' teams, ruling under the doctrine that there was a legitimate state interest in ensuring the competitiveness of the girls' teams by excluding boys but that no stigma would attach to boys who were excluded from girls' teams. The court was employing the "compensatory purpose" doctrine stating that female single-sex organizations do not violate prohibitions against sex discrimination if they specifically counteract the disadvantages that women have suffered and are designed to help women attain equality with men (Feldblum et al.). In very similar circumstances a Massachusetts court held that, though the purpose of ensuring competition was legitimate, there should be a remedy short of excluding boys (Feldblum et al.).

While some observers argue that any single-sex organization violates principles of equity, the "compensatory purpose" doctrine also has adherents who argue that single-sex settings may be legitimate contexts for bringing about gender equity. The principle generally is applied to protect single-sex situations for females, since they are deemed to be the group discriminated

against. In the example of sports teams, there may be a "compensatory purpose" in protecting all-girl baseball teams from boys, many more of whom have had opportunities to develop a high level of skill, but less reason to protect an all-girl gymnastics squad, in which boys and girls might practice together without jeopardizing the competitive situation of either, especially if they continued to compete in single-sex events. Just such a distinction was made when a state court held that a women's nursing school could not exclude men, since having men in their classes presumably would not discourage them from pursuing their field of study, even though women's colleges in general might be defended by the compensatory purpose doctrine (Feldblum et al., 1986). The "compensatory purpose" principle might be invoked to protect boys from having to compete with girls in sewing classes, though there is not a body of law to draw upon.

These and similar issues have been raised in proposals to establish all-male schools or pro-grams for African Americans males in Detroit, Milwaukee, Baltimore, New York City and other cities (Detroit Board of Education, 1991; Detroit Public Schools, 1990; Forum on Public/Private Social Concern, 1990; Metropolitan Detroit Branch, American Civil Liberties Union, 1991; NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, 1991a, 1991b; Whitaker, 1991). Rather than pursue the legal issues per se, the substantive arguments about separate organizations by gender and race will be addressed in a later section.

In an era of nearly universal coeducation, youth organizations that serve mixed sex groups may or may not have developed conscious policies to justify their decision to serve boys and girls together. The organizations that serve only girls or boys or that operate separate programs within the same organization have generally made deliberate policy decisions. An organization's attention or inattention to gender issues is likely to affect the recruitment and training of adult leaders, the types of activities offered and the styles of interaction of youth and adults, as well as the settings--whether single-sex, mixed-sex or some of each--through which youth are served.

B. Current Status and Perspectives on Gender: Examples of Organizations

At least six models characterize the current approaches of well-known national youth organizations. Although there are no doubt variations on these themes in many other organizations, examples from these six approaches can suggest the parameters of decision-making about gender issues when deciding whether to serve girls and boys separately or together in youth organizations.

1. An example of a coeducational organization that has not been particularly self-conscious about gender issues over the years is 4-H. Associated with the county extension system of the land grant

universities, 4-H is organized in every county in the nation. A voluntary National 4-H Council supports the efforts of county extension agents who work with volunteer leaders to deliver a wide range of programs to youth of school age (Cooperative Extension System, 1990; National 4-H Council, n.d.). Young people in 4-H belong to clubs and choose to work on projects. In many types of projects, notably in raising animals and collecting and displaying insects and plants, both girls and boys have participated for many years (Rockwell, Stohler & Rudman, 1981). Although the patterns have become less pronounced in recent years, in the past and present more girls than boys engage in projects on food preparation and clothing design and creation, whereas more boys than girls engage in projects on mechanics (M. Emerson, personal communication, August 13, 1991; Rockwell et al.). Thus as an organization 4-H has set out to give young people many opportunities to build skills and practice crafts they probably would not have learned in school, including leadership. In doing so the organization as a whole seems not to have set out either to preserve or to overcome traditional assumptions and patterns that prepare girls more than boys for homemaking roles and boys more than girls for machine maintenance and repair. Indeed, for a youth organization about which there is a research base stemming from the land grant university connection, there is surprisingly little research addressing gender as an issue.

2. Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. and Boy Scouts of America are two of the organizations that developed when it was assumed that girls and boys needed to prepare for quite different adult responsibilities. Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. periodically and carefully makes an organizational decision about whether or not to continue services only for girls and young women; to date the decision has been affirmative (Girl Scouts, 1990a). Programs and activities are developed at the national level and frequently reviewed and updated to appeal to girls and young women and provide exciting opportunities, including increasing experience in leadership, as Daisy through Brownie, Junior, Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts for girls from age 5 through 17 (kindergarten through high school). As more women have entered the paid labor force, Girl Scout materials have expanded attention to career exploration while maintaining the traditional opportunities in outdoor adventure and creative arts (Girl Scouts, 1987). Volunteer and professional positions in Girl Scouts are open to both women and men; women comprise the overwhelming proportion of adults in the organization. Over the years Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. has trained hundreds of thousands of volunteers in a variety of skills and employed significant numbers of female professional workers.

The programs serving younger members of Boy Scouts of America--Tiger Cubs, Cub Scouts and Webelos for boys ages 6-10 (grades 1 through 5) and younger Boy Scouts, ages 11-14 (grades 6 through 8)-continue to be for boys only. Oriented toward building character, including personal and civic responsibility, Boy Scouts until

recently involved both men and women as volunteers in the Tiger Cub and Cub Scout programs but reserved volunteer leadership in Boy Scouts for men, arguing that boys this age especially need male role models. Two years ago, this gender restriction was lifted; women may now fill any leadership role in Boy Scouting including scoutmaster. Boy Scouts of high school age can choose to participate in any or all of three options: Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts (concentrating on sports) and Explorer Scouts (concentrating on career exploration). Explorer Scouting and some school-based programs for younger children are mixed-sex programs with leaders of both sexes (M. Ringel, personal communication, October 29, 1991).

3. Girls Incorporated, formerly Girls Clubs of America, has adopted an affirmative action approach to services for girls, developing programs directed to enabling girls to overcome patterns of discrimination against girls on the basis of gender--often compounded by discrimination against girls by racial or ethnic group and poverty--to become competent, responsible and economically independent women. Programs give preference to providing skill instruction and other opportunities girls have missed or been excluded from in their communities and to problems such as adolescent pregnancy that differentially affect the lives of girls and young women. Focusing on a commitment to "positive environments for girls," Girls Incorporated affiliates include organizations serving only girls and young women, organizations serving both boys and girls but sometimes in separate buildings or sessions and organizations operating primarily coeducational services. Girls Incorporated centers are professionally staffed, offering services after school, on weekends and during the summer, and involve both women and men as employees and volunteers. As with most girl-serving organizations there are more women than men in adult leadership.

4. Camp Fire Boys and Girls, once Camp Fire Girls, Inc., made a deliberate decision in the mid-1970s to become a nonsexist coeducational organization, adjusting the names and content of programs to provide appealing opportunities for boys and girls. The organization operates a series of different types of programs, most of which are coeducational but some of which are used in single-sex settings by local Camp Fire organizations, all with a focus on nonsexist content or intention. In coeducational programming Camp Fire focuses on small groups that work together on tasks or projects, giving youth the experience of working with people of the other gender as leaders and teammates.

The organization considers it important to provide opportunities that are carefully structured to be nonsexist for children before they reach the age at which gender relationships are complicated by decisions about dating relationships (C. Coutellier, personal communication, May 15, 1991).

5. Two separate but parallel organizations merged at the national level in 1977 to become Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America. The organization pairs children and youth (ages 7 to 18) with an adult mentor with the intent of developing a sustained relationship. Most of the local organizations are now Big Brothers/Big Sisters and new organizations must serve both sexes, though there are seven Big Sisters organizations and four Big Brothers organizations remaining, primarily in large cities. In both the combined and separate organizations the predominant pattern is that boys from families without fathers are paired with Big Brothers and girls from families without fathers are paired with Big Sisters--that is, with a very few exceptions the pairing is same-gender even though the single-parent families nearly always have the mother or another woman present. The organizations often sponsor recreational opportunities for pairs of "Bigs" and "Littles," events that are coeducational in the combined Big Brother/ Big Sister affiliates. Some organizations more than others sponsor programs for young people not yet matched; all provide training for the adults and ongoing support for the pairs. (Beiswinger, 1985). The national organization offers sessions at training events on girls' special needs.

6. Many of the recreational sports organizations developed as programs for boys without parallel organizations for girls. Sometimes in response to litigation or community pressure, the original program retained its basic character but was opened to youth of the other gender who wished to participate. In Little League Baseball, Inc., for example, girls are admitted, but are estimated to constitute only one player in fifty. Reasoning that most girls play softball, rather than baseball, at school and into adulthood, Little League Softball, Inc., a single-sex program for girls (except in California, where litigation resulted in its being open to boys as well), was begun in 1974 and now involves some 250,000 girls and young women internationally, most of them in the United States. The rationale the organization offers for operating a baseball program open to girls and a softball program closed to boys is that this usually preserves the level of skill and competition that allows the largest number of youth to participate in a program that is both challenging and enjoyable (S. Keener, personal communication, August 13, 1991; Little League Baseball, n.d.-a, n.d.-b).

These examples do not exhaust the available approaches for deciding about whether and how to serve one or both genders and they certainly do not exhaust the list of youth organizations that have made such decisions in the last twenty years. We return to a consideration of the setting in which youth programs are conducted in a subsequent section, moving first to how gender issues affect the content of activities and skills offered in youth development programs.

III. What gender issues affect the informal education and enrichment offered by youth development programs?

It might be argued that some activities are "naturally" coeducational. It may be that gender issues are less likely to be raised when aptitudes and interests have traditionally been assumed to be similar across gender, for example in music and theatre and more recently in journalism and law. Even in areas where the interests and skills of early adolescents are likely to be comparable across gender lines, gender almost certainly is still operating as a factor influencing the program and the experience of the youth who participate. In the absence of specific training and consistent monitoring, most adults who are not consciously avoiding sex-stereotyped behavior are probably delivering many cues consistent with sex stereotypes (Frederick & Nicholson, 1991; Klein, 1985; D. Sadker & M. Sadker, 1991). Even when fields as a whole seem to be relatively gender-neutral, subfields may have gender-specific traditions that tend to be perpetuated if they are not specifically challenged. For example, many girls play the flute but fewer play the saxophone; women are prominent in blues but less so in instrumental progressive jazz; in high school productions young women play Juliet and occasionally Hamlet but hardly ever Othello and, contrary to the practice in Elizabethan times, young men hardly ever play Titania or Lady Macbeth. Many of the content areas that become the subject of youth development programs have strong gender-based traditions that almost certainly affect the decisions and experiences of both the adult designers of programs and the young participants.

A. Math, Science and Technology

In spite of the evidence that basic capacities to engage in science and mathematics are similar across gender and racial and ethnic groups (see section I, Cognition and Performance), mathematics, science and technology have traditionally been considered the domain of white males. Studies suggest that more boys than girls associate science and math with males (Mullis et al., 1991). In youth development programs this means that girls and minority boys may need special encouragement to choose math and science activities and to persist in them once begun. There is continuing evidence that girls are more likely than boys to underestimate their skill and performance in math and science (Fry, 1990; Mullis et al., 1991) and to be less confident in these fields. In addition, fewer girls than boys have experience in math and science outside school (Fry; Matyas & Kahle, 1986; National Science Foundation, 1990) so that beginning skill levels of girls and boys the same age are likely to be different. Whether using screwdrivers, power tools, protractors, barometers or pressure gauges, more girls than boys in youth development programs are likely to be first-time users and more boys than girls are likely to have experience. Of course familiarity with a given set of tools is likely also to vary by geographic region and type of

community. Adults need to be alert to these factors to avoid leaving beginners behind or making them feel inadequate and to avoid perpetuating gender stereotypes that girls are "naturally" less interested or less skilled in science and technology. It may be especially critical to support the skills of experienced girls, lest they be teased for having atypical skills.

Youth development programs provide excellent opportunities to increase the exposure of early adolescents to enjoyable and practical uses for computers. Here again, more boys than girls are likely to have experience outside school (Miura & Hess, 1984; Sanders & Stone, 1986). Many video games emphasize fast action, aggression and winning at the expense of others, values that currently appeal to more boys than girls (Fisher, 1984; Gilliland, 1984; Kiesler, Sproull & Eccles, 1983) and that in current society often are associated with high technology per se. On the other hand, software ostensibly designed for girls may be vapid and limiting. There are other pitfalls to avoid. Some adults may have a tendency to prepare boys for programming and girls for word processing, or to perpetuate the practice of schools in providing some of the participants most in need of diversion, adventure and practice in creative problem-solving--girls, students from inner-city schools, students who are performing below the class average--with only drill and practice on the computer.

Several analysts (Lockheed & Frakt, 1984; Sanders & Stone, 1986; Schubert & Bakke, 1984) have noted that "first come, first served" is a disastrous rule to apply in high-technology programs. More boys than girls feel confident around equipment, are willing to experiment and learn at the same time and are willing to dominate a piece of equipment rather than take turns. Some research suggests that if score-keeping on new competitive computer programs begins immediately, more boys do well, but if everyone practices first the gender discrepancy in scores is substantially reduced (Lin, 1982a, 1982b). Other research suggests that more girls than boys opt for group activities on the computer and develop complex programs that may require more time to create (Gilliland, 1984). In the absence of adult regulations such as signing up, taking turns and having creative and educational activities take precedence over more purely recreational uses, the relative advantage of boys over girls in knowledge and experience is likely to be perpetuated. Sensitivity to differences in interest and style that may correspond to gender can help adults plan nonsexist programs involving computers and similar equipment.

Many of the adults who work with youth, perhaps disproportionately the women who work with youth, feel unprepared to offer programs emphasizing science, technology and math. The legacy of channeling women away from math and science and not considering it critical that they be competent in these fields has as a corollary the heavy concentration of women who have not studied science or engineering in elementary education, arts, humanities and the social sciences,

fields that did not require as much math and science of college entrants and majors. In turn, people with backgrounds in these fields are more likely to be working directly with youth, especially in out-of-school programs, than are the technically trained. The experience of such organizations as Girls Incorporated (Wahl, 1988), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (Matyas, Ehrenfeld & Combs, 1991) and EQUALS (Kreinberg, 1987) indicates that the discomfort of adults is curable. These organizations offer engaging training opportunities that give adults the opportunity to work through their own anxieties and that offer approaches and activities for working with youth that are exciting for the young people without requiring an advanced degree of the adults. On the other side, some women and men who are proficient in scientific and technical fields are eager to work with youth as volunteers but have not had the courses in childhood development that make them confident in knowing how to approach sixth graders (Project Link, 1989; K. Rowe, National Society of Professional Engineers, personal communication, August 1991). Teams of professional or volunteer youth workers comfortable with science and scientists and technicians comfortable with youth make for exciting programs. Programs in math and science may need to affirm for both girls and boys the appropriateness of women in science by including both women whose livelihood depends on their skill and education in science, math, engineering and technology and women who are competent and comfortable with these fields without earning their living in them.

The complex interaction of gender issues with competence in math, science and technology in the past makes it especially challenging to offer equitable programs. The challenges for developers of these programs include providing mixed-sex programs that are not mostly boys, that is, mistaking current interest level for necessary interest level; providing exciting opportunities designed to include girls that take account of their current levels of skill and confidence and providing nonsexist programs that assume and model that everyone is and needs to be good at math, science and technology.

B. Altruism and Community Service

Youth organizations are well known for their role in providing opportunities for community service and for fostering habits of volunteerism. The literature on youth development indicates that early adolescence is an ideal time to offer young people meaningful opportunities to contribute to the community. Benson, Williams and Johnson argue in The Quicksilver Years (1987) that fourth and fifth graders are naturally altruistic, looking outward to the community and world and feeling strongly committed to peace and ecological values, in the years before their changing bodies and capacities to reflect on themselves turn them more inward. Konopka (1976), Lipsitz (1980), Pittman (1991) and Wynn (1982) emphasize that early adolescents need to feel they are contributing, not just accepting

the ministrations of adults. To do no more than participate in activities that are planned, supervised and executed by adults is to be treated as a child and many early adolescents resent it. Within this context of the readiness and importance of opportunities to contribute, social indicators suggest that more boys than girls have attitudes that reflect low levels of altruistic, prosocial values (Benson, 1990; Girl Scouts, 1990b; Peng, Fetters & Kolstad, 1981) and fewer boys than girls spend time in social service (Hodg-kinson & Weitzman, 1990; Medrich, 1991; Medrich et al., 1982; NELS:88, 1990).

Many traditional programs for boys stress individual competition and individual achievement, even in the group context (cf. Kleinfeld & Shinkwin, 1982; Scanlan, 1988; M.D. Smith, 1988) so that boys may feel under pressure to "get something out of it" when they provide service. Programs may especially need to include male role models who affirm for both girls and boys the appropriateness of community service and nurturing for boys. Many traditional programs for girls stress girls' helper roles and many more girls than boys have experience in caring for younger children (cf. Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1990; NELS:88, 1990). When girls visit hospitals, nursing homes or other adult gatherings they often are dressed to look "cute" and are expected more to entertain than to develop relationships or take responsibility for meaningful tasks. Yet these visits often are deemed community service. Since service to others is so much a part of societal expectation for women, girls who do not choose community service may be considered selfish when boys would not. Nicholson (Girls Clubs of America, 1985b) argues that by high school many young women expect to have to find personal or family solutions to problems of social injustice, rather than expecting to make demands on employers or politicians to change the rules or "level the playing field." This suggests that it may be especially important for girls to have experience in effecting positive change through group effort and practice in political decision-making. Girls Incorporated makes the distinction between community <u>service</u> and community <u>action</u> and argues that girls already are offered many opportunities for the former but need opportunities to become proficient in the latter.

The context of community service, if it involves projects planned and organized by young people themselves, may be an excellent setting in which to overcome gender barriers. A context in which organizational skills, commitment and follow-through are important is one in which some girls and some boys will shine. A project designed by youth builds the type of interdependence that comes with specialized tasks, defined roles and a feeling of togetherness and belonging in the overall enterprise. Social psychologists (Sherif & Sherif, 1969) have long argued that "superordinate goals" reduce internal group conflict and foster group achievement. Klein (1985), Lockheed (1985b) and Maccoby (1990) argue that such structured group processes give youth experience of shared

competence across gender and racial lines and foster mutual respect.

Projects to build neighborhood parks for younger children, to plant trees or reclaim trash-ridden streams, to register adults to vote and to end the killing of dolphins in tuna fishing have engaged the skills and attention of early adolescents. The National Crime Prevention Council provides materials and support to engage young people in a variety of projects they design themselves to address community crime. The American Red Cross offers first aid training and Safe Sitters, Inc. prepares early adolescents to be reliable and safety-conscious babysitters. Nearly every youth organization that serves young people ages 10 to 15 has a community service model of which it is particularly proud.

From the perspective of gender equity the challenges include providing programs that expect and enable boys to contribute their time and effort to others' well-being; providing opportunities for girls that do not reinforce the idea that their own needs come last, after the needs of everyone else are met; providing settings in which boys and girls perform community service together without reinforcing traditional patterns and expectations for roles and competen-cies; and providing opportunities for both girls and boys to take action in the community--to formulate the problem to be solved or work to be done and not just to respond to requests for volunteers in service.

C. Sports

Sports is a major interest of youth in early adolescence (Haas, 1984; Passer, 1988). Opportunities to participate in nonschool sports have burgeoned in the last two decades (Berryman, 1988; cf. Kleinfeld & Shinkwin, 1982), perhaps responding in part to the crunch of resources in many school systems, during which school sports programs are likely to experience deep cuts (Seefeldt et al., 1991). Among eighth graders in the United States 45 percent of boys and 30 percent of girls say they participate in nonschool sports (NELS:88, 1990).

Most analysts say there is no reason based purely on anatomy or physical ability that boys and girls should be on separate teams or engage in different types or amounts of physical activity prior to puberty (Duquin, 1988; Linn & Hyde, 1989; Women's Sports Foundation, n.d.). Traditionally, many more boys than girls have had experience in team sports and practice in the skills that lead to them, practicing with fathers or other adult males beginning at an early age and continuing informal games at school or in the neighborhood. Thus mixed-sex teams in sports such as baseball, basketball and hockey in which teams are selected by volunteering or by high levels of skill are likely to be predominately male--that is, only "elite" girls are likely to be playing with "typical-to-elite" boys. Seefeldt, Ewing and Walk (1991) estimate that on

average girls are two years behind boys in sports skills because of differences in practice and they find that same-age coeducational programs in sports are unlikely to work well.

Boys in most communities are expected to be interested in and good at sport and are under gender pressure to engage in sport; girls are likely to have opportunities to engage in sport but to be expected to speak up if they are interested. The philosophy of youth sport varies widely among organizations (Berryman, 1988). Youth development experts stress moderate expectations, not specializing in one sport too early and having fun, but many parents and some coaches prefer highly competitive, physically and emotionally stressful sports even for middle school children (Duquin, 1988; Martens & Seefeldt, 1979; Seefeldt et al., 1991; M.D. Smith, 1988). Programs emphasizing strongly competitive, warlike sports images often associate sport with masculinity and exclude or discriminate against girls (Duquin; cf. M.D. Smith). At the same time, girls interested in competing at an elite level in team or individual sports may experience pressure to be more "feminine" (Bredemeier, 1984).

The passage of Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and the efforts of parents and community organizations to see that this law is enforced have dramatically increased the opportunities for girls in sports in most communities, both in and out of school (Martens, 1988, Table 1 [p. 18]; Project on Equal Education Rights [PEER], 1979). Still, many and perhaps most communities provide more opportunities for boys than girls, ostensibly responding to the demand without asking whether the demand would be different if the opportunities were different. The difficulty in estimating the equity of sports opportunities is compounded when organizations, for example departments of parks and recreation, do not gather statistics about participation in their programs by gender (Girls' Coalition of Southeastern Pennsylvania, 1984; C. Smith, 1991).

African American, Latino and low-income boys may be under special and unrealistic pressure to excel in certain sports as their best hope for escaping poverty. It does not speak well of a society when the odds against winning a college scholarship are very high and the odds against a professional career are even higher (Seefeldt et al., 1991; Women's Sports Foundation, 1990) yet young men feel they have few alternatives and begin planning for careers in sports at early ages. In general, social class, geographic and cultural factors strongly influence the opportunities youth have to choose particular sports. For example, upper and middle class white girls have more encouragement than other girls to engage in sport at all, to play tennis or golf and to achieve elite status given the expense of training (Oglesby, 1984). Statewide emphasis on a sport, for example girls' basketball in Iowa and boys' football in Texas, encourages children and youth to pursue that sport rather than others. And, as mentioned above, one expects to

see more programs for snow skiers in Colorado than Illinois and for water skiers in Florida than Arizona.

The challenges to equitable programs in sports include providing enough opportunities in sport that all early adolescents who want to participate can do so; reconciling the philosophy of sport with available opportunities so that youth are comfortable with their own level of skill in a program that nevertheless challenges them; training coaches in youth development and nonsexist programming as well as sports skills; and determining which combinations of settings and styles of leadership provide the most positive developmental opportunities for the greatest numbers of young people.

D. Sexuality

Not surprisingly, youth are very interested in sexuality at early adolescence and often confused by the changes in their bodies and emotions and by the changes in adults' responses to them. There is interesting but not necessarily consistent evidence on whether young people experi-ence more or less pressure at adolescence to behave in accordance with gender expectations (Crockett et al., n.d.; Harter, 1990; Hill & Lynch, 1983). This is especially difficult to fathom in an era when adult roles are converging and the attitudes and behavior of many adults conform less to gender stereotypes than was true in the past. Some people have argued that young boys are under great pressure not to seem like "sissies" but that they are afforded more latitude by early adolescence and that girls have considerable flexibility during childhood to be "tomboys" but experience pressure to give up boyish ways at adolescence (see Hill & Lynch). On the other hand, by the end of early adolescence for the large majority of young people the attraction to members of the other sex has increased and the tendency toward sex segregation has decreased; one result may be a greater ability to relate to others as individuals rather than in categories such as sex and race, increasing the flexibility to be oneself, whether that self conforms to traditional gender expectations or not. The verdict is still out on whether early adolescence is a time of more or less rigid gender roles and more or less salience of the issues of gender conformity. There is some evidence that this varies considerably by community (Frederick & Nicholson, 1991; Ianni, 1989; Richards et al., 1990).

The range among youth organizations in attention to sexuality education and skills for decision-making about sexuality also is very wide. YWCA began advocating for better sex education at the turn of the century. County health departments, Planned Parenthood and the Center for Population Options for years have provided resources and trained educators to support community groups in offering sex education and curricula have been developed by such organizations as Search Institute (Forliti, Kapp, Naughton & Young, 1986) and Public/Private Ventures (1987). Many religious

organizations have approved programs that are offered to youth groups, the National Urban League developed a play about sexual responsibility for junior high and high school students to enact and by the mid-1980s 83 percent of Girls Incorporated affiliates reported offering sexuality education. In general it is more difficult for conservative organizations and conservative communities to provide such programs.

Until recently sexuality and early pregnancy were assumed to be the province of girls and programs addressing adolescent pregnancy still are much more likely to be provided for girls (CDF, 1988b; Dryfoos, 1990, p. 63; Sullivan, 1990). The wide range of sexual experience among early adolescents has strong implications for appropriate programming. For example, students who are not doing well in school are more likely to be sexually active, as are students who are using harmful substances (Dryfoos; Elliott & Morse, 1989). More African American youth than Latino/Latina youth or youth of European descent are sexually active during early adolescence (Dryfoos), although the racial/ethnic and economic differences decreased considerably during the 1980s (Forrest & Singh, 1990; NCHS, 1991). Within racial/ethnic groups and at a given age, more boys than girls are sexually active (Elliott & Morse; Hayes, 1987; Sonenstein et al., 1991), even though girls begin puberty earlier. Although the docu-mentation is far from perfect, it seems that in many early pregnancies the male is two to three years older than the female (CDF, 1988a; Dryfoos; cf. Zelnik & Shah, 1983) and is sometimes much older (CDF, 1988a), again with implications for sexuality education in youth organizations. Since some 27 percent of girls and a higher proportion of boys have had intercourse at least once by age 15 (NCHS, 1991), it seems incumbent on youth development organizations to think carefully about their policies and programs addressing sexuality and sexual behavior, including their positions on providing education, eliminating sexual harassment and facilitating access to reproductive health services.

Adolescents receive mixed messages about sexuality. On the one hand corporate America uses sex to sell everything from milk and baby powder to beer and perfume. On the other hand such subjects as birth control and breast self-examination are taboo in polite company and on some television networks. Little wonder that many young people are confused. In light of mixed messages and taboos, the importance of conveying accurate information to youth may suggest the need for some single-sex sessions, where youth are less likely to be inhibited about the questions they ask and the arguments they make. One large study of sexuality educators (Kirby, Alter & Scales, 1979) indicates that the gender of a sex educator is not particularly salient to the quality of a program. The educators in this study concluded that comfort with and enthusiasm for the subject and rapport with young people were more important than the gender of the facilitator.

The double standard of sexual conduct is still much in evidence in the United States: boys are expected to display sexual prowess, girls to accept the consequences if they engage in sexual intercourse (CDF, 1987; Greenberg & Campbell, 1989; Whatley, 1989). The prevalence of sexual harassment by teachers and especially by fellow students in secondary schools (Bogart & Stein, 1989) and in middle and elementary schools (Sadker, Sadker & Shakeshaft, 1980) has received little attention until recently but is another expression of the relationship between sexuality and power in American society. Sexuality educators urge the importance of an ethic in which people of both sexes take responsibility for their own actions and avoid putting pressure on partners to become more intimate than they are ready to be (Girls Clubs of America, 1988b; Hunter-Geboy, Peterson, Casey, Hardy & Renner, 1985; Kirby et al., 1979; Whatley). Some evidence (Girls Clubs of America, 1988a) indicates that resistance skills do not auto-matically translate from one arena to another among early adolescents; they need to practice resisting particular behaviors and imagining themselves in particular risky situations. If this is true, even though assertiveness techniques may be generic, early adolescents who have practiced saying "No" to drugs still need opportunities to practice saying "No" to sexual intercourse. Realistic practice in resisting pressure to be sexually active may require that at least some of the role playing occur in mixed-sex groups and pairs, although Girls Incorporated has reported evidence that their Will Power/Won't Power program for girls helped delay the initiation of sexual intercourse among 12- to 14-year-olds (Girls Incorporated, 1991).

Some analysts have argued that what sexuality education is offered tends to be heterosexist, ignoring both the needs and the feelings of the ten percent or so of young people who believe or realize they are gay or lesbian (Grayson, 1989; Whatley, 1989). Given an emerging picture of a correlation between homosexuality and suicide among adolescents in the United States, suggesting that young people who think they are gay or lesbian feel isolated and are under great stress (Harry, 1989), it may be especially important for programs on sexuality to address homosexuality, both to include gay and lesbian youth and to reduce homophobia[1] in a context of promoting tolerance of differences. Similarly, youth organizations need both to be sensitive to the needs and feelings about sex of youth with disabilities and to address the way other youth understand and respond to the sexuality of their peers who have disabilities, reducing isolation and misunderstanding (Corbett, 1989).

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[1]Grayson defines homophobia as "1) an irrational fear, dislike or hatred of gay males and lesbians and/or being labeled as gay or lesbian; 2) bias and discrimination against gay males and lesbians" [p. 134].

The challenges of providing programs, and perhaps linkage to health services, for early adolescents on the subject of sexuality and sexual behavior include providing programs that serve to untangle mixed messages and the double standard in ways that make sense to young people; providing appropriate intervention early enough to precede sexual intercourse of all or most of the youth in the group; increasing focus on boys' shared responsibility for preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease; addressing homophobia in a homophobic culture; addressing coercion in sexual relationships, including prevention of sexual harassment and sexual abuse and training for leaders in recognizing and referring abused youth; and providing nonsexist sexuality education that respects differences in family values and involves parents as sexuality educators.

E. Aesthetics

At first glance aesthetics seems to be an arena of relative gender equality. For example, boys and girls are about equally likely to have music lessons (Medrich et al., 1982) and in nearly every style of music the most famous stars include both men and women. Yet some of the most persistent gender stereotypes, images that may limit the development of early adolescents, also fall under the rubric of aesthetics.

Although girls are less likely than boys to be expected to excel in sports, girls are more likely to be--and to experience pressure to be--involved in programs of aesthetic movement. For example, many more girls than boys study dance, participate in gymnastics (Martens, 1988), belong to pep clubs and drill teams or take up baton twirling. Although there is cultural variation in the latitude boys have to study dance, or particular types of dance, many boys may be discouraged from pursuing their interest in aesthetic movement. As in most fields of endeavor, some of the most famous names are those of men--Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, Fred Astaire, Mikhail Baryshnikov. A much higher proportion of professional dancers are women, but we tend to know them as members of groups--the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders, the Rockettes, the corps de ballet. Opportunities for boys to participate in aesthetic movement may need to emphasize the athleticism required, involve several boys at each level of skill and involve adults who affirm and model the appropriateness of these activities for boys.

Opportunities in the visual arts often are still highly stereotyped during childhood so that by the time they reach early adolescence more girls than boys are likely to be skilled in using a sewing machine or designing a quilt and more boys than girls will have collections of model cars or airplanes they have built. While both types of activities encourage the development of small motor skills, the perpetuation of gender stereotypes may be reducing the pool of males in clothing design and of females in automotive design. Especially as more and more programs are offered for

mixed-sex groups it may be important to preserve the traditionally female crafts, less valued in the larger society, so that both girls and boys can pursue them. The visibility of football hero Roosevelt Grier's hobby of needlepoint helps increase the latitude boys have to pursue nontraditional crafts. Organizations that fund and support programs in the arts for youth, for example state arts and humanities councils and museums of art, might ask how the program will support gender equity as part of the proposal process.

F. Violence and Conflict Resolution

Family and neighborhood environments affect children's attitudes toward the place of violence in gender relationships and in the resolution of conflict. Some ethnographers note the role of aggression, mockery and insults in developmental patterns of creative word play, with intricate gender differences, among African American children who grow up in relatively segregated communities (Hanna, 1988, pp. 86-104; Heath, 1983, p. 178). Urban boys especially are under pressure to resort to violence to settle disputes and to belong to groups or gangs that feud over territory and other scarce resources (Ianni, 1989, pp. 186-7) and urban youth, particularly African American males, are in constant jeopardy of physical harm (Wilson-Brewer, Cohen, O'Donnell & Goodman, 1991). Many more boys than girls are expected to need to defend themselves physically and are taught to do so (Duquin, 1988; Lipman-Blumen, 1983). Many more girls than boys are taught to use discussion, accession to demands or flight when confronted with the threat of violence (Lipman-Blumen). Given gender stereotypes and expectations, boys are especially likely to need opportunities to learn the value and skill of nonviolent responses to threats and girls are especially likely to need opportunities to learn the value and skills of self-defense and assertiveness in a world that no longer, if it ever did, assures their physical safety.

The literature is clear that early adolescents need skill and practice in making decisions and resolving conflicts (Ianni, 1989, p. 185; Kerewsky & Lefstein, 1982) and youth development programs provide an ideal setting in which to develop these skills. Organizations differ considerably in the emphasis they place on self-defense and nonviolent conflict resolution. Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America has an Empower program that engages teens 13-18 in recognizing and dealing with sexual abuse, both for themselves and in behalf of siblings or other younger children (Herrerias, 1989). The Southern California Coalition on Battered Women publishes a curriculum for young people ages 13-18 entitled Skills for Violence-Free Relationships (Levy, 1984, cited in Whatley, 1989). And Wilson-Brewer and her colleagues (1991) have reviewed eleven violence prevention programs offered in schools, community-based organizations, institutional settings and elsewhere in Atlanta, Boston, Santa Barbara and other communities (Cohen and Wilson-Brewer, 1991).

In some communities and neighborhoods the development of early adolescents is threatened by physical danger and these young people need programs in coping with daily fear. The prevalence of violence toward women in reality and caricatured in music videos and other media threatens the healthy development of both girls and boys. They need programs that emphasize and model positive, mature cross-sex relationships of all types--employee, colleague, mentor, friend, parent-in-law, lover, spouse, parent and more.

The challenges include providing opportunities to develop practical skills for avoiding violent situations, resolving disputes without violence and dealing with violent situations; providing group settings for youth where they feel comfortable discussing and making recommendations about gender and violence, substance abuse and violence, guns and youth survival and similar topics; and mobilizing communities to address the causes of violence and make the neighbor-hoods safe for the youth who live there.

IV. What are the implications of our current understanding of the effects of gender for planners of youth development programs?

Earlier sections have explored the similarities and differences of girls and boys at early adolescence. A brief look at large national youth organizations indicated that these organizations serve girls and boys in a variety of settings--coeducational, separately for girls and boys, a mixture of these settings--and take a variety of perspectives on gender and its importance to program development. A brief review of topic areas on which gender might be especially salient to youth development programs--math and science, sexuality, sports, aesthetics and violence and conflict resolution--gave ideas for managing programs and activities in these spheres, occasionally making recommendations for single-sex or mixed-sex settings.

In this section recommendations are made for developing and delivering nonsexist, gender-equitable programs. The section begins with a discussion of values about gender issues and a brief argument in favor of sex equity in youth development programs and proceeds to recommendations for fostering sex equity in all youth development programs, whether they are delivered with boys and girls together or apart. Then the rationale for single-sex programs for girls is set forth and examined, with recommendations as to how this setting can foster sex equity. A comparable rationale for single-sex programs for boys is set forth and examined, again with recommendations for sex-equitable programming in this setting. The argument about whether youth development programs <u>should</u> be offered in mixed-sex or single-sex settings is left to the next section. The paper concludes with recommendations for further research.

A. Values and Beliefs

The difficulty in recommending strategies for managing gender issues in youth development programs is that genuine controversy remains about how different women and men should be from one another. Legitimately held and cogently argued positions may lead the program developer in very different directions. Nevertheless, most of the evidence suggests the convergence of male and female roles in the United States and this is the basis for arguing here that all youth should be prepared for roles as paid worker (earner, colleague, customer, leader), family member (sibling, partner, parent) and community member (friend, volunteer, citizen, advocate, office holder, patron). Despite the persistence of sex segregation in the workplace (Baron & Bielby, 1981), there are women and men in nearly every imaginable job and increasingly men and women work together in the same factories and offices (Adelman, 1991; Johnston & Packer, 1987) and the trend is likely to continue.

This argues for the need to prepare young people for cross-gender friendship that is not based on romance or other accoutrements of sexual relationships (C. Coutellier, personal communi-cation, May 15, 1991; Maccoby, 1990). One version of the American dream of equality suggests that both girls and boys would overcome stereotypes based on sex, race, class, nationality, religion, language and physical challenge and interact more openly and as individuals (e.g., Grayson & Martin, n.d.; Lipman-Blumen, 1983; Palmer, 1989; Sleeter, 1991). Preparing early adolescents to be members of an equitable society requires attention to today's continuing inequities--both toward establishing more equitable value systems and toward encouraging the development of interests and skills that have been associated in the past with the other gender. Finding a path to equity is even more challenging when working with early adolescents, whose bodies and friends remind them daily that sexuality is a normal and exciting aspect of human personality. One strategy for achieving equity might be to act as if one's purpose is to eliminate sexual awareness, knowing in advance and with some relief that the attempt will be unsuccessful. A better strategy may be to engage young people in imagining and creating a new paradigm--one that reduces gender stereotypes and expands everyone's options while affirming the interests and skills people bring with them to the youth development context and acknowledging that sexual attraction is bound to be on the agenda. This need not be a homogenizing process but an increase in tolerance for difference and a celebration of diversity. It is this vision--equity without sameness--that guides the recommendation for achieving gender equity in youth development programs.

Just as there are value conflicts about how similar or different men and women should be, debates based on value and knowledge continue about the nature of the healthy adult personality. Should young people be encouraged to explore their own emotions, to speak

openly of problems and to seek help when they are feeling sad--a strategy often encouraged for girls? Or should they avoid wallowing in self-pity, move on to the next task and "tough it out"--a strategy often recommended to boys? One important reminder is that youth development programs are designed to support rather than to repair young people; youth in need of expert counseling should be referred elsewhere and youth development programs should prevent discussions from becoming amateur group therapy. Beyond that, the best prescription for developers of youth development programs may be to work toward balance--encouraging wallowers to keep their chins up and stoics to tune in a bit more to their feelings. The list of value questions that touch on gender in American society is astoundingly long. If we resolved the questions before designing youth programs, we would be programming for octogenarians instead. But it is useful to be self-conscious about the expectations we bring to youth settings, noticing that many of them are based on thoughtfully examined beliefs and others on stereotypes about people of a particular gender, race or class.

B. Recommendations for All Planners of Youth Development Programs, Whether They Work with Boys, Girls or Both

The groundwork for much of this advice has been laid in the previous discussion, so the advice is presented in brief form as points to consider in designing and implementing any program for early adolescents in order to foster gender equity.

- Involve adults who have examined their own beliefs about gender, are willing and trained in sex equity and who treat girls and boys with respect.

- Involve adults who expect significant performance of girls and boys based on each individual's beginning level of skill and confidence and who avoid both rescuing girls and expecting the superhuman of boys.

- Give early adolescents the space and freedom to be themselves, to take charge of what they will do and to practice real decision-making and problem-solving, but watch for male dominance (or dominance by other subgroups) that is especially likely to occur when adults are in the background. Tinker with how to deal with such dominance when it occurs--intervene to stop it? Discuss immediately why it is occurring? Note its occurrence to those who dominated? Focus on the responsibility of the group to fend off efforts to dominate?

- Vary the size of groups and amount of structure to give practice in sex-equitable interaction in a variety of contexts. Consider that large groups or crowds, in which the patterns of interaction are structured by youth themselves, tend to perpetuate the relative influence of males over

females, whites over people of color, high-income over low-income and so on and be prepared to respond with discussions of styles of interaction, dominance versus leadership and how leaders emerge.

- Provide structured interaction deliberately focused on overcoming gender discrimination and involve youth in developing systems of sanction for making gender discrimination off limits.

- Structure some mixed-gender interactions with "superordinate goals"--situations in which each individual's contribution is needed in the face of collective need, risk or threat from the outside.

- Notice and support behavior that goes contrary to gender stereotypes: provide extra permission for girls to compete or "tough it out" and extra permission for boys to respond to how others are feeling.

- Encourage cross-sex friendship and cooperation and discourage flirtation and
other means of sexualizing ordinary encounters. Being careful not to single out or embarrass individuals, take the time to talk about the power relationships and implicit sexual metaphors when girls run "cute" instead of fast (attractive is weak and coy in females) and when boys display their muscles when a task requires physical strength (attractive is sexual conqueror in males). Can young people begin the process of developing "sexual metaphors that posit sex as knowing, sex as communication, and sex as a way to explore one's own and another's being free from fear, guilt and humiliation" (Greenberg & Campbell, p. 23)?

- Offer discussion groups facilitated by empathic adults to address issues important to young teens, including work and family responsibilities; sex, dating, relationships, homophobia; peer culture and expectations for appearance and dress for girls and boys; crowds and cliques; take the discussion beyond griping to formulate strategies the group and individual members can employ to reduce the pressure young people face.

- In skill-based activities develop systems of grouping that cut across gender or other stereotyped expectations of who is already skilled. For example, in mixed-gender settings try grouping by interest or skill level in fine enough gradations that several groups include members of both sexes. However, be aware that in practice assigning by ability or "tracking" often perpetuates discrimination on the basis of sex, race or income (Oakes et al., 1990) and use grouping to overcome rather than to perpetuate differences in opportunities to

achieve.

- Offer early adolescents a wide variety of new experiences and opportunities to expand their horizons and increase their skills in areas in which beginning levels of skill are not likely to be stratified by gender, for example in theatre, debate, sailing, ice skating or ecology.

- Take into account that there may be a "critical mass" of girls for girls to feel comfortable in a mixed-gender setting--generally more than one or two but less than half. Consider whether "critical mass" might also be important to adolescents from other racial or ethnic groups or who have physical challenges and recruit participants accordingly.

- Address directly the values that underlie continuing gender inequities and that may be confusing early adolescents--values and assumptions about mothers as having the primary responsibility for parenthood and fathers as having the primary responsibility for family income, about violence toward women and children, the double standard of sexual conduct, women as sex objects, men as impervious to physical and emotional pain and men as the authority figures in family and workplace.

C. Concerns for Planners of Single-Sex Programs for Girls

Whether a separate, or single-sex, setting for girls is especially positive for girls or promotes gender equity depends very much on the environment, values and relationships established there.[2] To illustrate this point and to sketch the potential for disagreement among those who espouse separate programs for girls, three different types of single-sex programs for girls are described below. These are "ideal types" or caricatures, depending on one's perspective, and are not intended as accurate descriptions of any actual organization or program.

The Ladies' Club

The Ladies' Club is built on the presumption that girls both are and should be very different from boys. Since a woman's place primarily is in the home, the program stresses cleanliness, physical attractiveness and preparation for roles as homemaker and mother with a flavor of "teaching our girls to be little ladies." Leaders are protective of girls and rescue them from making

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[2]This section is based on "Issues in Positive and Separate Environments for Girls," an unpublished memorandum prepared by the author for the Girls Incorporated (then Girls Clubs of America) strategic planning committee in June 1984.

inappropriate choices, modeling a version of power based on indirection and manipulation. Girls who do not consider "adventures in sewing" their idea of adventures are guided toward appropriate choices or allowed to leave. Vigorous physical activity is unnecessary, but for those who enjoy it The Ladies' Club offers jumping rope for little girls and dance and selected individual sports for early adolescents. Leaders in The Ladies' Club are dedicated to the status quo ante, either oblivious to the current roles of women or opposed to them. Women are leaders in traditionally female activities and, to the extent traditionally male activities are offered, they are led by men. Women conspicuously simper or defer to men when they are present.

The Haven

In The Haven girls are seen and heard, taken seriously and appreciated. Girls grow up in a society that teaches them they are very different from boys and by the time they reach early adolescence girls are different from boys in some recognizable ways. They tend to be interested in and competent at different activities from boys and to be more helpful and less assertive in orientation than boys. Roles as spouse and parent are more important to girls' concerns than boys'; many girls aspire to careers in the traditionally female "helping" professions and most boys do not. Girls have learned that they are "supposed to be" expressive, tender and nurturant, while boys are "supposed to be" instrumental, tough and autonomous. In The Haven these differences are understood and anticipated, without being treated as inherent or immutable.

The Haven is designed to give girls some relief from being treated as very different from boys, all alike, and inferior--experiences they often have in the mixed-sex world. So The Haven provides girls opportunities to feel competent at what they do well now, whether their skills are traditional for women or not. It reconstructs the stereotypical view of women as "just housewives" by validating the productive work women do in their roles as mothers, wives, household managers and community volunteers. It counterbalances the standard school curriculum by giving women credit for overcoming barriers and becoming significant contributors in the fields of medicine, agriculture, art, science, industry, commerce and government, in both historical and contemporary contexts. The Haven reconstructs the standard hierarchy of values and gives credence to such values as interdependence, altruism and peace. It gives girls permission to be themselves--in a sense people first and female second--by relieving the pressure to behave in sex-appropriate ways or to pursue sex-appropriate interests. In The Haven what girls do is both female and normal. The leaders include both women and men who are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about women's past and present accomplishments, both traditional and nontraditional. They like girls and listen carefully to what they say. The leaders include

women who are clearly both competent and feminine and whose accomplishments are in fields traditional for women.

The School for Success

The premise in The School for Success is that girls are not inherently different from boys, nor will the roles they assume as adults be very different from the roles of their male counterparts; but the socialization of girls in coeducational settings has not caught up with the real world of today and tomorrow. Pragmatically, the rules of success are not likely to change very much in the next generation or two, so girls are entitled to learn how to play and win by these rules. Girls in The School for Success have opportunities to develop attitudes, skills and qualities that the coeducational environment often assigns to and reserves for boys. It is a setting in which girls can unlearn, or fail to learn, incompetence in such traditionally male and lucrative fields as math, science and technology. Girls are rewarded for independence and self-reliance and get practice in bringing about positive change through individual initiative and collective action. Leaders have high expectations for girls in using their bodies vigorously and skillfully and programs support the development of throwing, catching and batting in preparation for team sports in early adolescence.

The School for Success has opportunities to tinker and get messy, ask questions about the natural world and persist beyond the facile "right" answer. There are computers, power tools, construction sets and old machines to take apart and girls are expected to be interested in and good at these activities. Girls practice making, enforcing and challenging rules, competing and winning, being conspicuous for their ideas instead of their bodies, asserting themselves and boasting. Problems and issues that affect girls more dramatically than boys--obesity, sexual abuse and adolescent pregnancy, for example--are confronted directly. Leaders in The School for Success include women and men committed to gender equality and with demonstrated skills in helping girls overcome obstacles to their individual achievement and in enhancing girls' confidence in themselves. They include women and men who demonstrate skill in activities traditional for the other sex and who work together in ways that model alternatives to males supervising females. In The School for Success girls learn to survive and thrive in a world of continuing gender inequity.

Recommendations

Clearly The Ladies' Club is not designed to foster gender equality, while The Haven and The School for Success take different perspectives on what constitutes, and therefore how to pro-mote, gender equality. Without a body of research conducted in youth development programs to provide definitive answers, it nevertheless seems fair to say that most of the national youth organizations

that serve girls separately and that have large memberships adopt some variation or combination of The Haven and The School for Success in their rationale for continuing to serve girls separately (Nicholson, 1984; reviews of materials from Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Future Homemakers of America, Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. and YWCA; conversations with leaders in many youth organizations over the last ten years). Affiliates of these organizations that more closely approximate the Ladies' Club probably would be thought of as departing from the organizations' mission of preparing girls for womanhood in contemporary society.

The tension between The Haven and The School for Success is theoretically based and consciously parallels the tension in feminist theory between those who affirm and applaud the differentness of females, sometimes called the "new feminists," (Gilligan, 1982; see Tyack & Hansot, 1990, p. 282) and those who argue that embracing female values and ways perpetuates myths of inherent gender difference and relegates another generation of girls and women to oppression (e.g., Deckard, 1979; see Tyack & Hansot for a discussion). The justifications used to defend separate environments for girls by both girl-serving youth organizations (Girls Clubs of America, 1982; Girl Scouts, 1990a) and schools for girls (Coalition of Girls Schools, 1990; Emma Willard School, 1990; Griffith, 1989) include elements of providing girls a place to be themselves and of preparing girls to meet the highest standards in nontraditional fields. In the list of recommendations that follows, aspects of both The Haven and The School for Success are included, with the idea that it is helpful for planners of youth development programs to have a clear idea why they are choosing particular strategies but that positive environments for girls need not be theoretically pure.

- Involve adults in taking girls seriously for "who they are, what they do, and how they think and feel."

- Involve women as planners and facilitators for a number of reasons: as role models, as people who share certain experiences with girls and because a higher proportion of women than men are committed to gender equity and to fostering girls' growth and development. (Note that the last reason is based on observations such as attendance at conferences on girls and gender equity, rather than on presumptions of any inherent capacity of women to be more committed to equity.)

- Involve men as planners and facilitators for several reasons: to model that men are interested in and committed to girls and their achievement, to provide early adolescent girls additional opportunities to interact with nonfamily adults of the other sex and to model working with women in nonsexist and unsexualized ways as colleagues, supervisors and friends.

- Start where girls' interests are and move forward; begin at

current levels of skill and expect high performance in moving to the next level.

- Use the absence of pressure from and competition with boys to introduce or strengthen skills in such areas as sports, risk-taking, orienteering and neighborhood exploration, physical strength and endurance, math, science and technology, computer programming, auto mechanics, lawn care and career options.

- Provide sexuality education and build skills for decision-making; address sexual pressures including sex discrimination and sexual harassment, heterosexism and homopho-bia; discuss conflicts between family and work roles and strategies for coping with them or bringing about institutional change.

- Develop assertiveness skills, especially as anchored in early adolescent experience of sexuality, substance abuse and other potentially risky situations and behaviors.

- Address women's achievement and accomplishments in many nations and cultures in science, art, agriculture, politics and other fields; present adventures in "herstory" as a counterbalance to the "history" still taught in many schools.

- Provide advanced levels for learning and for celebrating traditional arts and skills for women--culinary arts, stitchery, herbal medicine.

- Proliferate opportunities for decision-making, agenda setting, public speaking and other skills of leadership.

- Provide opportunities some parents would not approve of if offered in mixed-gender settings, for example out-of-town travel and overnight camping.

- Provide practice in advocacy and public action, as distinct from traditional opportunities for community service.

- Celebrate the sisterhood of girls and women, the experience of belonging, through shared stories, songs, laughter and fun.

D. Concerns for Planners of Single-Sex Programs for Boys

Promoting gender equality is not the usual reason given for continuing to offer separate pro-grams for boys. Rather, the focus usually is upon the optimum development of boys into young men. As with separate programs for girls, separate programs for boys are not automa-tically either positive for boys or promoting of gender equality. Again three models--or caricatures--are presented to illustrate the differences in assumptions about how best to foster early adolescent boys' development; again these are not intended as descriptions of any existing programs or organizations.

The Bastion

In The Bastion boys learn what it means to be a man's man. They go through rigorous physical training and learn to rely on themselves in times of danger and scarcity. Self-defense is practiced to a fine art and leaders know about the use and care of many types of weapons. The discipline is harsh and immediate--orders are followed without discussion or the boy takes the consequences. Loyalty to one's team is expected and rewarded but boys learn never to show weakness, even to their teammates. Big boys don't cry, nor do they show evidence of physical or emotional pain. Boys need to learn a Spartan existence, to do without, so much of the program is outdoors and with minimal equipment. The whole world depends on the strength of men, so boys must learn to shoulder the responsibilities of the breadwinner and authority figure and be prepared to teach their sons the same. Women and girls should be treated with respect but they are not as tough or as skilled as men and boys, so you can't really count on them. Women don't really know what it is like to be a man so all the leaders in The Bastion are men. In The Bastion boys learn to be men--tough, reliable, competitive and winners.

The Harbor

In The Harbor boys can be whoever they are without apologizing for it. They learn about men of many cultures who have been wise and talented, who have won wars and made peace, who have overcome obstacles to achieve great things for themselves and provide for their families. There is a library with quiet places to read as well as computers, a kitchen and video games. Boys learn that academic achievement is important and that fun includes thinking and figuring things out. Small groups work on projects ranging from earning money to go to NASA space camp to survival cooking to forming a rock band. In the Harbor boys are free to pursue their interests without the pressure to impress girls with their strength or prowess. They trade baseball cards and statistics, discuss the fine points of the latest game and shoot baskets one-on-one if there aren't enough guys around for a game. Leaders are around to talk over problems at home and they sometimes organize discussion sessions on issues such as drugs in the neighborhood, sex and AIDS, or coping with pressure to dress beyond your means. The boys make most of the rules and there are officers and a members' court to enforce the rules. Most of the leaders are men but the women are enthusiastic and really like and understand boys, so there isn't any movement to replace them. In The Harbor boys can be regular--not sexy, not super, not dumb, not nerds--just regular.

The School for Life

In The School for Life boys pay attention to values missing in many versions of the male model. Away from girls so that they don't

feel silly, they play with younger children and learn to take care of them. They visit older people in nursing homes and get to know them as people, playing cards, swapping stories and sharing meals, sometimes even feeding an older partner. They take field trips to laundromats, practice mending jeans and sewing patches on jackets and make and eat nutritious snacks. In The School for Life there are programs in conflict resolution and negotiation, in assertiveness skills for saying no to risky situations without losing your friends and in recognizing and getting beyond stereotypes. The boys talk more about themselves, whether having fun or dealing with difficult family situations, than they do at school or in other groups and find that getting things off one's chest makes it easier to get up in the morning. Some of the boys are whizzes on computers and share inside information, others have hobbies in sports or science and some are good at rap or break dancing. There are adults to talk to about how to get involved in something you might be interested in, whether many other boys do it or not--like tap dancing or glass blowing or finding out about your family history. In discussion sessions boys talk about pressure to be sexually active, to be tough and to take women less seriously than men, sorting out for themselves what makes sense in traditional gender roles and what might be way out of date. The leaders include both men and women, modeling cross-gender friendship and leadership without flirting. Both men and women are competent and confident at what they do and much of what they do is nontraditional for their gender. In The School for Life boys learn that boys are people with feelings and needs, joys and hopes, pleasure and pain; they learn to contribute to the family, neighborhood and community through skill, interdependence and caring.

Clearly The Bastion serves to perpetuate gender differences and gender stereotypes, while The Harbor expands the latitude of gender roles for males and The School for Life deliberately compensates boys for the skills and experiences they may not be getting in coeducational settings. In the absence of thorough research on youth development programs for early adolescent boys in action, it is partly speculation to say that most programs combine elements of The Bastion and The Harbor with occasional glimpses of The School for Life. This is the case in one study of a Boy Scout camp (Mechling, 1981) and in the justifications for separate schools for boys (Riordan, 1990). It is probably more typical for separate programs for boys to focus on interests and skills that are traditionally associated with boys than on those in which boys must catch up with girls. In coeducational more than in separate programs boys have opportunities to try out traditionally female pursuits. For example, boys are an increasing if still small proportion of the participants in programs on clothing design and manufacture in 4-H, and Camp Fire specializes in coeducational opportunities to try unfamiliar skills. Again, if there is a typical single-sex program for boys it probably is not directed at achieving sex equity.

Very much in the news recently are efforts in many cities to establish special programs for African American boys, several of them emphasizing Afrocentric curriculum (Detroit Board of Education, 1991; Detroit Public Schools, 1990; Forum on Public/Private Social Concern, 1990; Poinsett, 1988; Whitaker, 1991; see also Gibbs, 1988a and Wilson, 1987 for a discussion of the antecedents of these proposals). For example, the Male Youth Enhancement Pro-gram of the Henry C. Gregory, III Family Life Center (n.d.) in Washington, DC combines commitment and support for academic achievement, a holistic approach to health promotion and interaction with male role models of several ages, so it shares as a youth development pro- gram several of the characteristics considered important in special schools or school programs for African American boys. Among the characteristics considered important in these schools or programs are positive African American male role models who take family responsibilities seriously, freedom from pressure to disdain academic achievement, a reexamination of pressure toward short-term financial gain and a reputation for toughness and bravery and a reaffirmation of the importance and appropriateness of gainful employment in the mainstream economy, with accompanying support to develop the skills and achieve the connections necessary to pursue this path. In several of the descriptions the focus on African and African American culture is important, as a means to anchor young men's identity in positive, community-based values for which they already have respect and to celebrate the strengths these boys have to draw upon. In effect, to base the shift toward positive values on the dominant culture, the argument goes, is to embrace the continuation of poverty and injustice that has created so dire a set of circumstances for black males in the first place. Like the Bastion and the Harbor, the special case of the Afrocentric program for boys seems to be designed to foster the development of boys and not to achieve gender equity. The discussion of whether youth development programs <u>should</u> be separate for boys, separate for African Americans or separate for African American boys is reserved for section V.

<u>Recommendations</u>

Separate programs for boys emphasizing progress toward gender equity, encouraging positive attitudes toward girls and women and compensating boys for experiences many of them do not get in coeducational settings would include several of the characteristics in the following list:

- Design programs to involve women and men who respect and care about people of both genders and all ages. Note that such evidence as exists does not necessarily endorse separate programs for boys as those most likely to lead to reductions in gender stereotypes.

- Involve men and women who take the strengths and needs of boys seriously and who model adult relationships of cooperation and female leadership.

- Discuss and discourage excessive models of male sport; encourage healthy exercise and fun without the dangerous "work through pain" approach.

- Develop skills in self-reliance such as cooking, clothing maintenance and repair, house cleaning, safe driving and using public transportation.

- Focus on community and family roles and on the responsibility of boys and men for their own and the family's survival; encourage the concept that boys are responsible, not just "helping out."

- Offer opportunities to experience success and take pride in helping and contributing service.

- Structure situations to foster cross-age and multicultural cooperation and achievement.

- Develop skills in conflict resolution without violence.

- Include opportunities for creative self-expression in many modes; celebrate the multicultural roles of men in the arts; practice drawing, painting, working with clay or basket materials, storytelling and dance.

- Offer family life and sexuality education that counters stereotypes of men as sexual conquerors, that prepares boys to function as comfortable sexual beings and that prepares them for relationships based on mutual respect and consent; discuss homophobia and other forms of intolerance of differences in sexual orientation and lifestyle.

- Support academic achievement and learning for the relevance and love of it.

- Offer advanced training in skills traditional for boys such as model-building, automotive design and repair and individual and team sports.

V. What difference does it make whether youth development programs are offered in mixed-sex or single-sex settings?

In the previous section, while the outline focused on single-sex programs for girls and single-sex programs for boys regardless of setting, the discussion raised such issues as the size and structure of groupings, the amount of adult supervision, the levels

of interest and skill of participants, the gender and patterns of interaction of leaders and other factors that relate both to gender and to the development of early adolescents.

The arguments that are made in favor of offering youth development programs in single-sex or mixed-sex settings raise again many of the key issues about gender in early adolescent development. They go further to raise some of the most fundamental questions with which society is grappling. They rest on assertions about how different boys are from girls and how different they should be. They raise questions about the survival of the species, the hierarchy of social values and the character of the workplace for generations to come. They highlight the issues of gender equality, including assertions about the status of equity or inequity in current organi- sations and institutions. They raise the issues of racial equality, including tension between strategies that emphasize pride in the subculture versus those that emphasize achievement in the wider society. Clearly this discussion cannot do justice to such fundamental issues. Pointing out their relationship to the seemingly simple question of whether youth development pro-grams should be offered with girls and boys together or separate suggests why some people hold such vehement opinions on the subject.

A. Major Arguments for Mixed-Sex and Single-Sex Settings in Youth Development

Many of the arguments made about the context in which young people should be served not surprisingly are made about coeducational versus single-sex schools (Lee & Bryk, 1986; Marsh, 1989; Riordan, 1990; Riordan & Lloyd, 1990; Tyack & Hansot, 1990). Although these arguments certainly apply to youth development programs as well, the fact that young people spend far less time in a given youth program than they do in school needs to be kept in mind. Single-sex youth development programs do not separate young people from the other gender for sustained periods, as for instance a boarding school does, and so are less likely to have major impact on personality development, either positive or negative, than a single-sex school. That is, the decision about whether to offer or participate in a single-sex environment may be less crucial when applied to a youth program than to a school. In general the relative brevity of youth programs means that their total impact on youth is probably less than that of a consistent school experience. This distinction is less apt for developmental programs in which youth begin in childhood and participate during adolescence or in which they engage several times a week.

<u>Arguments in favor of mixed-sex settings</u>

<u>Life is mixed-sex</u> and youth development programs should be preparing young people
for life, with its rules and expectations, advantages and disadvantages intact. The importance to society of the ability

of each sex to live and work with the other is so important that separation of the sexes is a questionable practice. Workplaces, once primarily separated by gender, are increasingly integrated by gender, so that girls and boys need to interact before and during adolescence to establish healthy adult relationships not based on romance or sex.

Separate is inherently unequal and providing single-sex programs for girls confirms their second-class citizenship. The existence of separate programs for girls confirms that the coeducational environment "belongs" to boys. Girls have always been assertive in single-sex environments; it is when they reach the mixed-sex world that they need the skills to excel and skills learned in the separate environment may not transfer. Serving boys separately focuses on and gives them practice in differences in the "male" skills and attitudes preferred in the larger society. Serving girls in separate settings means that issues critical to their well-being--for example, acquaintance rape or the allocation of responsibilities in the family--may not arise or may be fruitless to pursue without boys around. Because society values females less, programs and organizations for girls will always receive fewer resources and will have a constant struggle to maintain high quality.

Separate programs postpone equity by putting off the day that the remaining barriers to gender equity in schools, youth organizations and other settings are eliminated. If moves toward equity are concentrated in single-sex organizations for girls, the impetus and leadership needed to bring about gender equity will be missing in mixed-sex programs. There is nothing inherently unequal about mixed-sex settings, so those concerned with gender equity should invest their efforts there.

There is no need for separate programs when the two genders are much alike in needs and interests. Differences in interest and skill should be treated as individual differences, not an occasion for separate programs. Coeducational environments are doing a good job and have served over time to reduce gender bias. Opening all programs to both genders expands the opportunities for everyone; it offers sewing to boys and machine shop to girls; in sports it allows individuals of either gender to play and compete at their level of skill.

Arguments for separate programs for girls

In separate programs girls overcome discrimination they face in the rest of their lives, catching up on experiences and skills they are deprived of in home, school and community. Gender stereotypes, discrimination against girls and lack of expectation for their performance in traditionally male areas

persist in today's society. The obstacles are blatant on television and in toy manufacture and subtler but intractable in schools. Girls need relief from stereotypes and gender pressure to gain confidence, expect great things of themselves and develop proficiency in science, sports and self-reliance. Nearly all of them will work for pay but the larger society still emphasizes their roles as lovers, wives and mothers and ignores the past and present achievements of women in traditional and nontraditional spheres. In separate settings they can sort out these demands and better prepare for the world they really will live in. Girls deserve settings in which girls are all the leaders and all the achievers to reaffirm the appropriateness of leading and achieving.

Justice delayed is justice denied and girls have waited long enough for the coeducational settings in which they spend most of their lives to treat them fairly. Girls would need separate programs far less if mixed-sex schools and programs had in the last 150 years, or even the last 20 years, paid consistent attention to achieving sex equity. It is not acceptable for yet another generation of girls to give up opportunities that can increase their capacity for individual achievement and wait for plodding and halting progress toward equitable environments where girls and boys are together. The demand that they do so continues the tradition of female sacrifice for the good of males and society.

Arguments for separate programs for boys

National survival depends on masculine values for boys and too many of the
environments in which girls and boys are together, far from being male-dominated, have been thoroughly feminized. School systems emphasize quiet, compliant behavior inconsistent with the toughness and drive necessary for sustaining a market economy and democratic nation. Most teachers in elementary school are women and increasing numbers of boys grow up in households with no men present, leaving boys with no role models and potentially confused development. Unsocialized boys are a threat to each other and to the society. Thus boys need separate environments in which to cement their male identity, channel their drive and initiative, acquire self-discipline and master techniques of conflict resolution.

Boys need relief from gender pressure just as girls do. Especially during adolescence boys in the presence of girls may be under pressure to scoff at academic achievement and the habits of diligence that foster it. In separate environments boys can escape from many of the distortions of the youth culture--the pressure to be physically attractive, to be conspicuous for leadership or flaunting of authority and to be interested in what is popular. They need freedom to be people

first and boys second and space to take a step back and figure out what being male really requires of them.

Arguments for and against separate programs for African American males

The proponents of special programs for African American boys and young men, like many proponents of separate programs for girls, take an affirmative action position. They argue that black males are not succeeding in the context of dominant values and current institutions, not because they are incapable of success but because the opportunities to achieve have been foreclosed. By early adolescence many boys in inner-city neighborhoods mired in poverty and unemployment opt for alternative, and available, standards for their achievement and become involved in gangs and the underground economy--a response that may be rational given their realistic options but which is physically dangerous and self-defeating in the long run. To break this cycle proponents argue that a separate environment can offer African American male children a chance to affirm learning that is exciting and relevant, meet and respect men of skill and accomplishment and raise their expectations and increase their chances for pursuing education, interesting work and a fulfilling family life. Parallel arguments could be made, though they have not been made conspicuously in the news, for separate programs for Latino adolescents in inner cities.

Opponents of separate programs for African American males have argued that the strategy turns back the clock, reestablishing the legitimacy of keeping blacks out of the mainstream and exempting the larger society from dealing with the abysmal state of employment, public education, housing and public safety in cities today. The argument for an Afrocentric perspective in these programs has been criticized for romanticizing the very characteristics that have kept youth from achieving, thereby patronizing them by expecting less of their performance (Meyers, 1991). Organizations and individuals concerned with gender equity have argued that it is the larger society that has produced the dire circumstances of African American males, but the solution proposed in effect holds African American females responsible. Young African American women, many of them beginning during their own adolescence, are struggling to survive and to rear their children in the same schools and neighborhoods (NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, 1991a, 1991b; Page, 1991). If additional resources are brought to bear, they argue, it is unjust to leave girls out of the solution; moreover, it sets up a false division in the African American community. At the very least, if there are to be special programs for African American males there should be special programs for African American females (see Chira, 1991).

B. Weighing the arguments

The paucity of research conducted in and about American youth organizations makes it difficult to reach definitive conclusions

about many of the issues that have been raised here. Although vehement arguments are made about the effects on early adolescents of participating in mixed-sex versus single-sex environments and about the levels of achievement of youth whose experiences have been in typical versus deliberately sex-equitable programs, the research base on which to settle the disputes is largely missing.

Analysts do not all agree on the extent to which the public schools perpetuate sex stereotyping or practice gender, racial and economic discrimination (Oakes et al.,1990; Sadker, Sadker & Klein, 1991; Tyack & Hansot, 1990). There is some convergence toward the perspective that schools are not primary perpetrators of gender inequity but that, by failing to challenge gender bias, schools tend to perpetuate the stereotypes and expectations that students bring into the school from the general culture (cf. Leder, 1991; Lockheed, 1985a, 1985b; Tyack & Hansot; Wilkinson & Marrett, 1985). There is ample evidence that systems of curricular tracking in schools have the effect of perpetuating and magnifying racial, ethnic and economic differences in student achievement (Oakes et al.). One of the hazards of generalizing about the importance of gender and gender bias in early adolescents' experience is that different communities reflect quite different perspectives on youth and convey recognizable community values with strong implications for gender similarities and differences (Frederick & Nicholson, 1991; Ianni, 1989; Richards et al., 1990).

Overall it seems fair to say that in many institutions and organizations the norm of "youth" that many people are paying attention to is white male youth, with the remainder of young people lumped together as "females and minorities." No doubt white boys have interesting and special strengths and needs, but they constitute a decreasing proportion of the total youth cohort in the United States. In deciding whether programs and services promote youth development in the coming years it will be especially important to disaggregate "youth" and to focus on the special strengths and needs of African American girls from rural Georgia and urban New York, Asian girls from fourth-generation Chinese families in San Francisco and first-generation Hmong families in Seattle; young Latinas from Mexico, Puerto Rico, El Salvador and Ecuador; girls whose families originated in all parts of America before Europeans arrived, including Hopi, Lakota, Aleut, Mayan and many others; Jewish girls from the midwest, Irish American girls who use wheelchairs, and a comparable list of boys in all their diversity.

There is no definitive research base from which to conclude which needs of which youth are best met in interaction with youth of the other gender and other cultural groups and which are best met in isolated groups of youth with the same gender, heritage or experience. However, putting together inferences from research on other aspects of youth development with the premise that promoting gender equity is a shared goal, the following generalizations may be warranted:

Concepts of gender equity in the United States constitution (13th and 14th amendments, equal protection clause . . .) and laws (Title IX, state public accommodation laws, state equal rights amendments. . .) suggest that organizations and programs should be open to everyone unless there is a good, equity-based reason for restricting participation.

Given the paucity of research on the effects of participation in mixed-sex or single-sex youth programs on early adolescents' development and given the fact that a high proportion of comparable mixed-sex and single-sex environments are in the voluntary sector, it may be counterproductive to eliminate any more of these natural laboratories before analyzing what difference they make.

For some groups with special strengths and needs, separation has been part of the problem. The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, for example, mandates the mainstreaming of youth with disabilities in schools and youth programs, redressing the invisibility of these young people when they are steered into separate environments. Leaders of American Indian schools argue that their cultures are still recovering from the United States government-sponsored Indian boarding schools that deliberately quashed Native American values and heritage. Similarly, 83 percent of eighth graders from the highest quartile of family income, compared with 60 percent from the lowest quartile in the NELS study (1990) participated in at least one out-of-school activity. The pursuit of equity requires continuing efforts to complete the inclusion of youth who want to participate as well as pondering the circumstances under which separation into subgroups by gender or other shared characteristics may be beneficial.

Gender bias in mixed-sex settings, while less than in the past, has been intractable. There seem to be good reasons to offer single-sex options as a means to "catch up" in unfamiliar skills and values (on the effectiveness of this strategy in schools see Lee & Bryk, 1986; Riordan, 1990; Riordan & Lloyd, 1990). Such "catch-up" strategies are much more difficult to implement in mixed-sex groups, where they require treating girls and boys differently in response to the same signals or for the same behavior. Assuming that separate programs for girls focus on compensating girls for opportunities they do not usually get in mixed-sex settings, single-sex settings that are positive for girls may not be positive for boys and vice versa. Although there may still be other sound developmental reasons for same-sex programs for early adolescents as further research is done, currently single-sex programs seem more justified when there is an affirmative action purpose.

Gender equity does not emerge automatically in either mixed-sex or single-sex settings and gender equity is atypical of

early adolescents' experience. Adults in both youth development programs and formal education need much better preparation if the goal of equity of outcome (Fennema, 1990) for girls and boys of all backgrounds is to be achieved.

VI. What are the priorities for research in understanding the significance of gender in youth development programs?

Experts on early adolescence contend that between ages 10 and 15 young people need opportunities to try new things, develop significant relationships with adults and peers, make more decisions for themselves, take pride in individual and group accomplishments and explore their own identities (Heath & McLaughlin, 1989; Pittman, 1991). The planners and implementers of many youth development programs define these as the goals of their efforts. In youth development programs the groups are often smaller and more interactive than in school classrooms and youth (or their parents) vote with their feet about which programs and projects to participate in rather than suffering the required curriculum. Adults are relatively freer from administrative duties and prescribed curriculum in youth organizations than in schools. Many questions arise about the effect of participation in <u>any</u> youth development program on the development of girls and boys. For example, do girls who participate in out-of-school activities have a more positive experience of menarche? Does this depend on whether the pro-gram included sexuality education? Do boys who participate in youth development programs espouse more prosocial values? Does this depend on whether the program includes the boys providing child care or community service? Is sex segregation as prevalent among sixth graders in coeducational youth development organizations as it is in coeducational schools? Why or why not? Does experience in cooperative learning in youth development programs carry over to academic performance in the school classroom? If so, is the effect different for boys and girls? African American girls and Latina girls? In short, participation in youth development programs is an important and understudied variable in understanding early adolescence, including gender factors in early adolescence. Further, youth development pro-grams have many of the features considered positive for early adolescent development and therefore are promising laboratories for studying such gender-related variables as learning style, peer and adult-child interaction in various environments, competitiveness, risk-taking, achievement orientation and self-image.

The topic of "setting," whether girls and boys are served separately or together in youth devel- opment programs, has been the subject of much of this paper. Serious qualitative and quantitative research is needed to learn more about these organizations. <u>Are</u> separate programs for girls more like The School for Success than like The Ladies' Club? What makes them so and who decides? <u>Are</u> mixed-sex youth development programs contexts

in which boys and girls work together and learn nonsexualized patterns of interaction or are they contexts in which traditional stereotypes are reinforced, or are they some of each? What makes the difference--the gender of leaders, the purposes of the organization, the types of activities, the style of leadership, the way the activities are structured, or what?

Overcoming the difficulty that we tend to treat youth as an undifferentiated--often middle class white male--mass, much more research is needed on the interaction of racial, ethnic, economic background and community variables with age and gender among early adolescents. This research might be conducted in youth organizations and certainly will be germane to youth development planners as they continue to make programs more inclusive and more equitable.

In many ways the youth development programs are experiments in the solution to prevalent problems of early adolescents, including those that vary by gender. Science centers in cooperation with the Association of Science/Technology Centers, Girls Incorporated, Girl Scout councils in Minnesota and the Dakotas, the Eureka! math/sports camp in Brooklyn and many others are promoting the inclusion of girls and of boys of color in science and math. The Girls Incorporated programs in substance abuse prevention and adolescent pregnancy prevention show promise for early adolescent girls. An evaluation of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America Smart Moves program shows the importance of youth development programs to the climate of communities. Police Athletic Leagues work with youth on trail bike safety and techniques. Violence prevention programs with a variety of goals show promise of making adolescence more survivable. Funding for simple and more sophisticated evaluation of the myriad programs could provide clues to those who work with early adolescents in formal education as well as to parents and other youth development organizations. Careful evaluation of school-based programs can also inform the programs of youth organizations.

Youth development programs include activities and strategies for overcoming gender barriers, reducing sex and race stereotyping and promoting equity. Programs of GESA, Green Circle and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith are used by youth development programs as well as schools. Several variations on the "media critics' workshop" engage early adolescents in addressing the media images that promote early sexual activity, limit youths' career choices and perpetuate limited horizons of family roles. These and many other strategies have potential for bringing about a more equitable society, but to date few of them have been studied systematically. Again, foundation and governmental support for careful evaluations and promotion of cooperation between university researchers and youth organization officials can have significant effects.

Research in youth organizations poses specific challenges. The voluntary nature of most such organizations makes the problem of recruitment and retention more difficult than in schools. Their public service orientation places limits on random assignment to treatment and control groups. Research involving deception or medical procedures would be difficult for many of them to participate in. On the other hand, there is a great deal to be learned about early adolescents, including gender in early adolescence, from a creative approach to research by, in and with outh development programs.

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